No. 3.

THE

AMERICAN SOCIETY

FOR THE

DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

ESTABLISHED OCTOBER 17, 1836.

By the State of New York,

INCORPORATED MAY 16, 1837.

PROSPECTUS.

"KNOWLEDGE is like the light of Heaven: free, pure, pleasant, exhaustless. It invites ALL to possession; it admits of no pre-emption, no rights exclusive, NO MONOPOLY."

"Promote, as objects of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of KNOWLEDGE."

Washington's Farewell Address.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY THE COMMITTEE, 142 NASSAU-ST.

NEW-YORK OBSERVER BUILDING.

1837.

NOTE.

Correspondence has already been commenced to some extent, with individuals of influence in different parts of the country, who express interest in the prosperity of this Institution, and offer co-operation and support. It is deemed highly desirable that individuals who feel interested in this enterprise, should communicate with the Committee. They respectfully ask the co-operation of their friends, in all parts of the country, in obtaining names of Members, and in securing such pledges of support, literary and pecuniary, as will enable them to act with promptness and decision.

Individuals disposed to become Life Directors, Life Members, or Members, are requested to signify their intention, as soon as may be, that a list of such names may be prepared, to be attached to the Prospectus and Reports of the Society.

Authors, having manuscripts designed for the Committee, may address them to the Secretary, or to any of the Literary Correspondents of the Society, with whom they may confer.

Those who receive this Prospectus, are respectfully requested to submit it to others, who would be likely to take interest in the object.

GORHAM D. ABBOTT,
Secretary.

New York Feb. 1839.
142. Nassau St.

~~New York, May, 1837.~~
~~142 Nassau-street.~~

~~New York 28 March. 1839~~

~~142 Nassau St~~
~~New York.~~

Documents & information relating to the interests of education in any of the States, will be thankfully received.

~~C. F. Hopkins & Son, Printers, 98 Nassau-street.~~

James Wadsworth Esq. *

* note at bottom of this page
* Recently deceased.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY

FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

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PROSPECTUS

OF THE

AMERICAN SOCIETY

FOR THE

DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

1. GENERAL DESIGN OF THE INSTITUTION.

THE establishment of a National Institution for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, has, for a length of time, engaged the attention of individuals in different parts of this country. In the course of the past year, measures were adopted in relation to this subject, of which the public has already been informed. The Institution has been duly organized; and the Executive Committee now respectfully submit to the consideration of their fellow-citizens, the following statement of its plan and objects:

It is the design of this Society to unite the efforts of literary, scientific, wealthy, and benevolent men, in diffusing useful knowledge, and in employing the arts of printing and engraving, in a way most likely to be interesting, salutary, and elevating to the popular mind.

There is in this country, it is believed, at the present time, a demand for the means of knowledge, which may with propriety be characterized as a NATIONAL DEMAND; a demand for useful knowledge from all classes of the people far exceeding the supply.

There are, however, in the vast resources of the literature of foreign countries, in the productions of eminent authors at home, and in the enterprise and spirit of our citizens, means amply adequate for the supply of this demand. From these resources the means of wholesome intellectual culture, and of individual and social improvement, may be brought into the circle of every family, and within the reach of every reader.

The materials for carrying out this design are abundant: — Delineations of the works of our Creator; the innumerable objects of interest in the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; the history of the world; the varied scenes and events of past ages; the origin of nations; the growth of empires; the ruin of cities; the overthrow of kingdoms and thrones; narratives of voyages and travels over every sea and land; the civil and political circumstances; the intellectual, social, and domestic condition of

the great family of nations; the biography of the great and good; the progress of knowledge; the opening prospects of society; the discoveries of genius; the improvements in the useful and the ornamental arts; the wide range of science and philosophy, material, intellectual and moral; in short, the moving worlds of mind and matter, furnish inexhaustible materials for useful publications, adapted to improve and elevate the mind, and to promote the best social and moral interests of society.

In an undertaking of this nature, it were affectation, at this period, not to recognise the influence of the Christian religion, as the great source and the only preservative of all our blessings, individual and national. Its great truths and sanctions are the only foundation of sound morality, the only defence of public and private virtue, the only safeguard of the social and moral welfare of individuals and communities. Its principles can alone inspire that purity, charity, and order, which are essential to freedom, and without which our free institutions must come to an end.

It is, however, no part of the plan or design, to propagate particular religious doctrines or theories; but to disseminate such useful *practical* knowledge, as may not only instruct, but exert among all classes a pure and elevated moral influence in respect to individual duty, in the various relations of life.

It will always encourage the circulation of good books by whomsoever published. It will regard the author or publisher of a useful volume as a co-worker, and a public benefactor. And any individual who will employ the pen or the press in extending the influence of knowledge and virtue, will find in this institution a friend and ally.

It will be a primary object to interest the youth of our country; and to invite and facilitate their acquaintance with works of the most improving character, by issuing them in the best style and by the free use of valuable illustrative engravings. It is hoped through the instrumentality of the Society, to bring within the reach of the entire youthful population of the land, a rich variety of works, eminently calculated to expand and invigorate the mind, improve the heart, and lay the foundation of real worth of character.

2. IMPORTANCE OF SUCH AN INSTITUTION.

If we trace the progress of publications in the United States, since the commencement of the present century, in character, as well as amount, and observe the vast improvement in books of elementary instruction, and the happy adaptation in general of the style of American authors to popular use, it may be doubted, whether in any age of the world, or in any country, such rapid and giant strides were ever before made, in developing the mental energies of a nation. Probably no other nation ever existed, in which the *habit of reading* was so *nearly universal.*

The unparalleled circulation of newspapers and periodicals of every description, has awakened a taste and desire for more solid and extensive reading, which every successive supply will only serve to increase. The authors, editors, and teachers of this age and country, have done more, perhaps, to *wake up* the mind of an *entire population*, than any other set of men that ever lived; and American publishers and printers have never been surpassed in the energy and enterprise with which they have wielded the press.

Our hundred Colleges, our Academies, High Schools, and Lyceums, scattered over the whole land; our Public School System, the extension and improvement of the means of education in Primary and even Infant Departments; our tens of thousands of Sabbath Schools with their libraries, placing hundreds of thousands of volumes in the hands of our juvenile population, have exerted, and are still exerting, a most powerful influence through the whole community, in favour of intellectual and moral cultivation.

If we look forward but a few years, we must see that the great mass of mind, throughout our land, cannot rest satisfied with any ordinary supply of the means of knowledge. The desire for knowledge will constantly increase, and the more regular and systematic the supply, the more steady and ever increasing will be the demand.

In about twenty years, at the present rate of increase, our population will be doubled. Of course, if the means of intellectual improvement only keep pace with the increase of our numbers, we must, in that brief period, double the amount of all the publications now extant in the land, to say nothing of replacing the millions of volumes, which it is hoped will be worn out by careful use. And who can foretell the yet undiscovered progression, which the mind of such a community will make, in its demands for the means of knowledge?

In these circumstances, the question arises, what is to be the character and tendency of the incalculable amount of reading with which this nation must be provided during twenty years to come? and surely it is a question of momentous import. The destiny of our country, and the best interests of man, are dependent on the answer.

If the mind of this nation shall be well-informed, well-balanced, well-disciplined, and regulated by principles of virtue and piety, our glorious institutions will continue. But ignorance, immorality, and *freedom*, cannot co-exist.

With such views as these, can we estimate too highly the importance of a National Institution, to aid in providing mental aliment for the people; in systematizing the various departments of knowledge of practical utility, and in issuing publications suited to the varied taste and capacity of different classes and ages, and which may be received with confidence by all, as well adapted to prepare the readers to discharge the duties of intelligent and virtuous citizens?

The Committee are also impressed with a sense of the importance of such an institution, from the great and increasing influx of foreign population, for whose intellectual culture no suitable provision is made. During eight months, in the year of 1836, from April 1 to December 1, more than 55,000 emigrants arrived at the port of New-York.* It is estimated, that the average arrival on our shores is more than 10,000 per month, throughout the year. Every additional facility for crossing the Atlantic will be likely to increase the number; and no one can tell how great and numerous the arrivals from the old world will be, when steam-ships shall connect it with the new.†

It is said that there are 30,000 Germans in the city of New-York. In Philadelphia and the State of Pennsylvania, the proportion is much greater. The Irish, Swiss, and French, especially in the valley of the West, swell the aggregate of our foreign population to a vast amount. They are cut off, in a great measure, from the use of books and other vehicles of information, circulated in their native tongue at home, and no adequate provision, if any at all, is here made for their improvement.

This institution hopes to render invaluable service to them and to our country, by providing books of elementary instruction and general information on all subjects, expressly for foreigners and their children; and thus to diffuse among them right views of their relations and duties as men, and as American citizens; of the nature of our government and civil institutions, and the obligations they impose on all who enjoy their blessings.

Not only do the condition and prospects of our own country, but those of the world, call for such an institution. The cry of waiting millions throughout the earth is for knowledge. Almost every uncivilized people are looking to this country and to England for books, for a printer and a press. Tons of printing type have already been sent from the United States to different portions of the uncivilized world; and the Committee, in common with the multitude of enlightened philanthropists who adorn the age, recognise the obligations resting upon us as a nation, to spread over the whole earth, every species of knowledge calculated to meliorate the condition of man.

In what age of the world, among what people, that ever existed, have so many circumstances combined to make such an enterprise, not only important and practicable, but almost indispensable? If we consider the necessities of our own country alone, and the yet uncertain issue of the great experiment of a self-governing people, so far, however successful, can an American think any effort too great or too costly, to save ourselves from

* Custom-House Returns.

† Professor Lehmanousky recently stated at Cincinnati, that 500,000 Germans, alone, are preparing to emigrate to this country, the coming year; and Professor Stow of Cincinnati, who has recently returned from Germany, corroborates the opinion.

the calamity, and the world from the disappointment of a final failure. Our government is one purely of public opinion; our institutions, our laws, our Republic itself must be sustained, if sustained at all, by the "*voice of the people*;" and what that *voice* shall be, is to be determined by the general intelligence and virtuous principle, which may be diffused through the community.

Let us give heed to the almost prophetic admonition of the father of his country, in the following passage from his farewell address:

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? and let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect, that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

"It is substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular governments. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

"PROMOTE, THEN, AS OBJECTS OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE, INSTITUTIONS FOR THE GENERAL DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE."

3. EXTENT OF THE FIELD.

There can be no question that our country, considering all the circumstances of its present condition and prospects, promises to be one of the greatest reading countries in the world. Already the number of newspapers in circulation is four times as great, as it is in Great Britain, France, or Germany, in proportion to the population. And it is highly probable, judging from the data which are accessible, that a greater number of volumes, in proportion to the population, are annually circulated here, than in the mother country, and the ratio is rapidly increasing.

The Society has already collected a mass of statistics, relative to the progress of the art of printing, showing the extent to which the business of printing and publishing has already been prosecuted in some European

countries, as an indication of what may hereafter be expected from it here. They clearly show the magnitude of the field which this Society has open before it. Some of these statistics will be embodied in the present pamphlet, if its limits will allow, or they will be given to the public in another form, among the early publications of the Society.

The English press alone, estimating from the increase of its issues, during the last ten years, will give to the world, in ten years to come, more than *twenty thousand* new works in the English language, exclusive of pamphlets and re-prints. A large proportion of these will be local in their character, and another large proportion will not be adapted to us. Of others, some will be salutary, and some highly injurious in their tendency; and the welfare of the community will depend in a very great degree, upon the proportion of these two classes, which succeed in obtaining a permanent circulation.

Besides, therefore, what this Society can do in producing works of its own, calculated to instruct and improve the community, how vast its influence may be, if it is well sustained, in selecting from this great mass, those works which are fitted to exert a salutary influence, and giving extent and permanency to their circulation; and by thus supplying the mighty mass of mind around us with what is good, help to exclude from it, influences which tend to corrupt and destroy.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOCIETY.

At a Meeting of Citizens held in the Clinton-Hall, New-York, on the evening of October 17th, 1836, for the purpose of hearing the Report of a Committee, appointed in May last, to mature a Constitution for an "American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge:"

Hon. Albert Gallatin was called to the Chair, and

Charles Butler, Esq., appointed Secretary.

Professor John Proudfit, in behalf of the Committee, stated the origin and objects of the meeting.

The Rev. Gorham D. Abbott, agent of the Committee, submitted briefly a view of the operations of the press in this country and in Europe; and of the proceedings of the English societies similar in their design to the one proposed.

As the report of his agency, it was stated, that distinguished men in various parts of the country had expressed their deep conviction of the importance and practicability of the object; and that meetings in relation to it had

been held at Saratoga, at Hartford, at Andover, and at the State Convention of Common School Teachers in Albany. The minutes of those meetings and the resolutions which were adopted, cordially approving the object, were read.*

The communications which had been received by the Committee were submitted. More than fifty in number had come to hand, from distinguished individuals, in the following States: — Maine, New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, Virginia, North and South-Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri. Among the writers were Governors of States, Justices of the United States, and State Courts, Members of the General and State Legislatures, Presidents of Colleges, Professors in Theological Seminaries, Teachers, Lawyers, Physicians, Merchants, Manufacturers, and Agriculturalists.

The letters of most of the following, or extracts from them, were read: — Their Excellencies Gov. Everett, Gov. Vroom, and Lieut. Gov. Robertson; the Hon. Theod. Frelinghuysen, and Chief Justice Hornblower; Anthony Barclay, James Wadsworth, and W. H. Seward, Esquires, expressing the most cordial and hearty concurrence in the objects of the Society.

The Constitution was then discussed, amended, and adopted, Article by Article, and with subsequent constitutional amendments, stands as follows:

1. CONSTITUTION.

Article I.

The name of this Association shall be "The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge."

Article II.

The annual payment of Five Dollars or more, shall constitute an individual a Member of this Society; of one hundred dollars within any one year, a Life Member; of five hundred dollars, a Life Director, and of one thousand dollars, within the same period, a Life Director, and an honorary member of the Executive Committee.

Article III.

Every member shall be equally entitled to vote at the meetings of the Society, shall be eligible to any office, and shall have the privilege of pur-

*See Appendix.

chasing the publications of the Society, at a reduced price. Life Members and Life Directors shall also be entitled to receive five per cent. annually on the amount of their payments, in the publications of the Society, if applied for within the year.

Article IV.

The Annual Meeting of the Society shall be held at such time, in the month of November, as the Board of Directors shall appoint; at which Meeting there shall be chosen, a President, as many Vice-Presidents as the Society may deem proper, and a Recording Secretary, all of whom shall be ex-officio members of the Board of Directors, and shall hold the same relation to that Board as they do to the Society. They shall continue in office until their successors are chosen.

Article V.

At the first meeting of the Society, there shall be chosen forty Directors, who, with the Officers and Life Directors, shall form a Board for the general management of the affairs of the Society. The elected Directors at the first meeting of the Board, shall be divided into four equal classes, whose terms of service respectively, shall be, one, two, three, and four years. At each subsequent annual meeting, one class shall be chosen for the four years next ensuing, the retiring members being re-eligible. The Board at their first meeting, and annually thereafter, shall appoint a Treasurer, and choose an Executive Committee, twenty-four in number, fifteen of whom, at least, shall be residents of the city of New-York. They shall make their own By-Laws, shall have power to fill vacancies, and shall annually report to the Society. Nine members shall constitute a quorum.

Article VI.

The Executive Committee shall elect their Chairman and other officers, and make their own By-Laws; they shall have the immediate direction of the funds and concerns of the Society, but shall not be authorized to render any of its members responsible, beyond the amount of their subscription; they shall carry into effect the resolutions of the Board of Di rectors, shall have power to call Special meetings of the same, and shall continue in office until a new Committee is chosen.

Article VII.

The Executive Committee shall elect from their own body, Standing Committees of Publication, each of which shall consist of at least three members; and no volume shall be issued, in the name of the Society, without the unanimous approbation of one of such Committees.

Article VIII.

The Executive Committee shall annually report in detail to the Board of Directors, a statement of their operations during the year, together with their existing engagements and works on hand and in progress. Through the Treasurer, they shall also make report of all receipts and expenditures, together with the condition of the Treasury, its assets, and liabilities. Such report shall be audited by the Board of Directors.

Article IX.

The Executive Committee shall have power to elect honorary members of the Society.

Article X.

Associations formed in aid of the objects and funds of this Society, and in accordance with the principles of this Constitution, shall be recognised as auxiliary; their members shall be entitled to all the privileges of members of the Parent Society, and their Presiding Officers, or other Delegates, shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors.

Article XI.

No alteration shall be made in this Constitution, unless approved by two-thirds of the Executive Committee; by two-thirds of the Board of Directors, present at a regular meeting, and by a majority of the members of the Society, present at an annual meeting, or one summoned with notice of its object.

3. SYNOPSIS OF THE PROPOSED PLAN.

1st. The objects of this Society are, — To promote the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge among all classes of the community, by issuing pure, entertaining, and valuable publications, in a cheap and popular form; — To elevate the character of our national literature, and raise the standard of morality, by the introduction and more general diffusion of works of intrinsic merit, in Belles Lettres, in Christian morals, in the Arts, in Science, physical, intellectual and moral; — To promote the improvement of our systems of Common School Education, by providing standard sets of books of instruction for Schools, and by procuring and publishing Statistics and facts, calculated to illustrate the condition and prospects of education in our own, and other countries. To provide suitable works of entertainment and information for children and youth; — To furnish the means of elementary instruction and general knowledge, in their own language, for resident foreigners and their children; — To cherish the general interests of literature, education, and religion; of agriculture, of commerce, and of the arts, by preparing appropriate standard Libraries of Useful Knowledge, embellished with illustrative engravings, and imbued with a Christian spirit, for families and schools, for the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, the seaman, and the settler in the West, such as every true patriot and enlightened philanthropist must approve; — And to establish correspondence with Societies and men of literature in our own and foreign lands, engaged in similar objects, with a view to procure every facility for promoting intellectual, social, and moral improvement.

2d. The *means* by which the Society hope to accomplish these objects, will be, by annual subscriptions, by donations and bequests from persons who feel interested in giving aid to such an enterprise.

3d. The *management* of the funds, and the general arrangements for carrying into effect the objects of this Society, will be vested in a Committee of twenty-four, to be chosen by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting.

4th. The publications of the Society, will be under the direction of select Committees, appointed by the Executive Committee.

5th. As the object of the Society is, the Diffusion of Knowledge through the Press, it will not be necessary that a separate system of auxiliaries should be organized and maintained throughout the country, with exclusive reference to these operations, as existing institutions, such as Library Societies, Lyceums, Literary Institutions, or even a few associated individuals can do in any place all that is necessary, for the introducing and circulating the Society's publications.

The details of arrangements for the co-operation of auxiliaries and for the effective action of the Society, will be determined from time to time, as occasion may require.

Farmer

BRIEF SKETCHES

OF

EUROPEAN LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

THE plan of an American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, was suggested by an examination of the structure and operations of various European Societies, for the advancement of Literature, Science, and the Arts. Almost every branch of knowledge, which the human mind can pursue, calculated to further the improvement and happiness of mankind, has somewhere in Great Britain, or on the Continent, called forth an Association of congenial spirits for its promotion.

There is also another class of institutions, commenced within a few years past, whose object is to diffuse, among all classes of the community, the *results* of the Literary and Scientific researches of individuals, as well as of public bodies.

The idea naturally suggested itself, that an American Society might, with great advantage, avail itself of these labours abroad; and by corresponding efforts in our own country, do a great and good work in spreading information among the people, and promoting the best interests of the community.

A brief sketch of some of the European Institutions, will convey an idea of the extent and usefulness of such operations abroad, of the advantages which this Society may derive from their labours, and of the importance and practicability of similar efforts in our own country.

There are in London no less than twenty-six Associations, comprising 13,300 members, founded for the sole purpose of promoting the interests of learning and science, and for diffusing useful knowledge; some of these we shall briefly describe: —

1. THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

MORE than ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS since, a few individuals in London, associated themselves to establish this Institution. On the 8th March, 1699, they met for the first time. The declaration which they put forth was brief, simple, and beautifully expressive of their noble object.

—"Whereas the growth of vice and immorality is greatly owing to gross ignorance of the principles of the Christian Religion; we, whose names are underwritten, do agree to meet together, as often as we can conveniently, to consult (under the conduct of Divine Providence and assistance,) how we may be able, by due and lawful methods, to promote Christian Knowledge."

The first meeting of the Society consisted of only *five* persons. The numbers gradually increased, until, in about two years, the sphere of their operations became so extended, that it was found necessary to divide the Institution into two distinct branches.

One branch was incorporated by William III., under the name of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign parts. This branch became very efficient in its operations, and our forefathers in this country were much indebted to it, for many of our early Christian Ministers.

The other branch retained the original name, and continued to prosecute its objects in two distinct departments; *namely*, first, the foundation and encouragement of Public Charity Schools; — secondly, the distribution of the Bible, the Prayer-Book, Homilies and other Religious Books and Tracts, approved by the Church of England.

This Society has the honour of being the first public body, that advocated and supported the general education of the people. In this department of its operations it has done great good. One of its first objects was, the establishment of Schools in each parish, in and about London. In ten years they numbered nearly Five Thousand children in London alone, receiving the benefit of Christian education, through its instrumentality. And in 1741, there had been more than *Two Thousand* schools founded in different parts of the kingdom, by the Society's efforts.

In 1784, when Sunday Schools were introduced, this Society extended its powerful encouragement to this new method of supplying a religious education.

In 1811, it gave origin to the National Society for the Education of the Poor on Christian Principles. The returns made to the Secretary of State of the Home Department now show more than ONE MILLION TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND CHILDREN, in week-day Schools, and more than ONE MILLION AND A HALF in Sunday Schools, under the patronage of this Society, receiving Christian education, on the principles of the Church of England. The National Schools are limited to the use of such religious books as are published by this Society.

The other department of the Society's labours, the circulation of good books, has not been less efficient and useful than this. For more than a century, it has been supplying the clergy with cheap standard books for their parishioners; the Hospitals, Workhouses, and Prisons; the Army and Navy, and the Colonies of Great Britain all over the Globe.

Through this Society, in 1825, every soldier in Great Britain was, by public authority, supplied with a Bible and Prayer-Book.

In 1827, every seaman, in her ships of war, was supplied with the same; and the religious publications sanctioned by the Society, constituted the *Naval Libraries* for her public ships.

In the progress of its operations, the Bible and religious books have been published in different languages, and very extensively circulated.

One great object of the Society was, to promote the progress of Christian Knowledge in Foreign lands.* For this purpose they established Foreign Committees, of which there are now fifty in zealous and successful operation, diffusing a practical knowledge of Christian truth, in the Colonies and other foreign dependencies of the empire. Each of the several Committees has under its care a particular portion of the foreign field, investigating its condition and wants, and directing the appropriate supplies.

In India, upwards of 200 native congregations have been gathered together, by the instrumentality of this Society; and when visited by Bishop Heber, they were regarded by him, as holding "the strength of the Christian cause in India."

It is more than *One Hundred Years*, since this Society established, perhaps the first Mission Press in the world, at Vepery, near Madras. Supplies of books, paper, materials for printing, and other stores, have long been furnished annually by this Society, to various Mission Stations and Schools in the East.

At some of the Foreign Stations, they supply the Schools with books of elementary instruction, containing the best moral influences.

The Society has publications in Tamil, Persian, Arabic, Teluzoo, Guzzerattee, Hindostanee, and Singalese.

They have Local Committees and Parochial Schools established in the principal places in the West Indies, the Bermudas, Prince Edward, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Canadas.

The Committee say in their *one hundredth* published Report, that "many, very many pious members of the Church, in distant Colonies, have been taught to look to the Society, as the chief source, under Providence, of sound Religious Knowledge and improvement for themselves, their children, and their children's children, and as a centre and bond of union for the whole British Empire."†

This venerable Institution had thus, for more than one hundred and thirty years, been prosecuting its objects with great and increasing success. Its influence in promoting the great cause of intellectual and moral improvement, throughout the whole extent of the British empire, it would be difficult to estimate. If we regard its early commencement, or the objects, which from time to time have engaged its attention, it seems to have been the parent of the great institutions, which have since arisen to wield the press and bless the world.

In 1832 the Society appointed a special Committee of General Literature and Education, to take up systematically the work of providing cheap popu-

* Principally in the British Colonies.

† Annual Report, 1833.

lar publications of an elevated character and moral tendency. The first work they produced was the "Saturday Magazine." London and all the large towns of the kingdom had been inundated with low and pernicious penny publications. A catalogue of the periodicals of this description was made out, and submitted to the Committee. There was the "Devil in London," "Figaro in London," "The Devil's Walk," "Slap at the Church," and others of similar character.

The example of the Penny Magazine, in supplanting a number of the most frivolous, scurrilous, and blasphemous publications, by substituting a work of real merit and intrinsic interest, convinced the Committee of the necessity of cheap popular works of moral tendency to meet the spirit of the times, or in the language of the Archbishop of Armagh, in the last annual sermon before the Society, "to bring the acquisition of knowledge within the guidance and safeguard of sound religious principles, and to combine religious instruction with the pursuits of human learning."

They determined to meet the existing evil on its own ground, and to issue a Magazine attractive and superior in its general character, and imbued with a mild Christian influence, in the hope of supplanting the infidel and irreligious works which were pouring forth from the press.

The following extract from the Prospectus of the American Edition of the Saturday Magazine, shows the state of things which gave origin to the publication and the general views of the Committee in undertaking it.

"At the time of its adoption, infidel and irreligious publications were most industriously circulated throughout the whole of Great Britain. The friends of social order, of vital religion, and of all the best interests of society, had reason to fear the subversion of the fairest civil, social, and religious institutions of the land. Atheism, infidelity, and irreligion of every form, were at work in the very elements of society. The Committee resolved to make a vigorous effort to redeem the increasing power of the press from such baneful perversions, and if possible to make them bear more directly and effectually upon the universal spread of knowledge, in connexion with sound principles of morality and religion.

"For this purpose they issued the 'Saturday Magazine,' intending to make it a cheap yet valuable and interesting work, adapted with great care and attention to *all classes* of readers. They hoped, by its cheapness, and the interest and real merit of its contents, to supplant those pernicious publications which threatened irreparable evil to the social system.

"The experiment proved eminently successful. The Committee reported, at the close of the first ten months of its publication, 'that it had (with one exception, 'The Penny Magazine,') outstripped all its contemporaries, in the extent of its circulation. Its regular sale was *eighty thousand* copies a week.' They also added, 'that the licentious and unprincipled cheap publications, which in the early part of the year had been exposed for sale at every corner of the streets of the metropolis, and in the provincial towns, had in a great measure disappeared.'

"At the close of the second year of its publication the Committee reported, 'an *increase* of nearly FIFTEEN THOUSAND copies to its weekly circulation,' and that 'the average number circulated each week, including the supplements, was more than *ninety-five thousand* copies.' 'The total number sold during the year was more than *four million, nine hundred and fifty thousand.*' 'Its influence had not been confined to Great Britain, or the British Colonies. Most of its principal articles had been translated into foreign languages. Stereotype metal casts from its wood cuts, had been supplied to respectable publishers in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and South America, and communications which had been made from other countries, led the Committee to anticipate the diffusion of good principles, through the medium of this work, over no inconsiderable portion of the Globe.'"

The Present Officers of the Society are,

HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, President.

Rev. George Owen, Cambridge, M. A.
Rev. George D'Oyley, D. D.
Henry Hugh Hoare, Esq. } Treasurers.

Rev. William Parker, M. A.
Rev. George Tomlinson, M. A. } Secretaries.

Rev. Thomas B. Murray, Assistant Secretary.

The Standing Committee, consists of *Sixty-nine*, including the Archbishops and many of the most distinguished individuals in Great Britain.

The Foreign Translation Committee, consists of *Forty-nine*.

The Committee of General Literature and Education consists of *Twelve*. Many of the individuals are, however, members of more than one Committee.

The influence and usefulness of the Institution is greatly promoted by the efforts of Local Committees established in all the principal cities and towns of the kingdom. They act for increasing its funds, enlarging the sphere of operations, facilitating communication with the Parent Society, and affording to the districts, in which they are established, a more easy and extensive supply of the Publications.

There are *Three Hundred District or Auxiliary Committees* in Great Britain, and *Fifty* in Foreign parts, acting in co-operation with the Society.

The income of the Society arises from Annual Subscriptions, Donations, and Bequests.

The subscribing members of the Society are, Gentlemen, *Eleven Thousand Eight Hundred and Forty-one*, paying annually, from *One* to *Ten* Guineas each; or making a donation varying from £20 to £200, in lieu of an annual subscription. And, Ladies, *Two Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty-four*, paying annually from *One* to *Five* Guineas; or making a donation from £20 to £100, in lieu of it. Being equal to *Fourteen Thousand Six Hundred* annual subscribers of a Guinea a year; amounting to $64,800, at par.

Some idea of the extent of the operations and influence of this Society may be obtained from the following statement of its income during five years past.

	1832.	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.
In pounds sterling,	£66,269.	£70,336.	£74,094.	£73,236.	£80,392.
In dollars at par,	$294,234.	$312,292.	$328,977.	$325,168.	$356,940.

The sales of the works of the Committee of General Literature and Education alone, during the years 1833 and 1834, amounted to £56,000, = $248,640, at par.

The legacies made to this Society from its commencement to the year 1836, amount to upwards of £200,000 in cash, bank stock, or funded property, = $888,000.

Among these will be found —

One legacy of	Baron Vryhoven,	£66,331	4	2,	or about	$294,510	at par.
"	Rev. Edward Parkinson,	20,000	00	0,	"	88,800	"
"	Rev. R. Wilkes,	17,722	15	5,	"	78,689	"
"	Rev. Richard Canning,	9,945	15	3,	"	44,159	"
"	Mrs. Jane Mander,	7,064	8	2,	"	31,365	"
"	Earl of Kerry,	5,831	13	3,	"	25,892	"
"	Mrs. Palmer,	4,000	00	0,	"	17,760	"
"	Mrs. Elkins,	3,500	00	0,	"	15,540	"
"	Joseph Hudson, Esq.,	3,000	00	0,	"	13,320	"
"	Lord Godolphin,	2,000	00	0,	"	8,880	"
"	Jacob Bryant, Esq.,	2,000	00	0,	"	8,880	"
"	Thomas Smith, Esq.,	2,000	00	0,	"	8,880	"
"	Isaac Hollis, Esq.,	1,900	00	0,	"	8,436	"
"	Henry Braddon, Esq.,	1,750	00	0,	"	7,770	"
"	Mrs. Francis Byrd,	1,230	00	0,	"	5,461	"
Twelve legacies of		1,000	00	0,	"	4,440	each.

Many others of £700, 600, 500, 400, 300, 200, and 100.

These are independent of the donations and annual subscriptions amounting together in one year (1836,) to £18,658, or $82,841.

2. THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

This Society has been in operation *thirty-five* years. It was instituted in 1799, just *one century* later than the preceding. Its commencement was feeble and comparatively insignificant. The first year it published only Tracts enough to form one neat volume. The fourth year its success was so great, and its opening fields of usefulness so important, that the Committee in their Report, proposed an extensive enlargement of its plan. With a view to meet the increasing demand among all classes of society, for Christian publications of an elevated character, they proposed to establish "a great depot in London, where the opulent might spend a guinea, and the poor be welcomed with a penny." Since that time its progress in extensive and useful operations, has been rapidly onward. The publication of volumes having been commenced with great success, it became by gradual steps, an object of prime importance. And now the institution might more appropriately be styled the Religious Book and Tract Society. The entire set of books alone, which it has issued, makes a handsome library of 300 volumes. The whole catalogue of its publications, embraces a list of more than *sixteen hundred*. They say, it would require volumes to specify the extent of the circulation and usefulness of their works.

Among the Present Officers of this Society are,

Rev. R. W. Sibthorp, B. D. Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, Ryde, Isle of Wight.

Rev. E. Henderson, D. P. Highbury College, London.

Rev. Charles Scholl, Minister of the French Church, London.

Rev. William Jowett, M. A. Secretary to the Church Missionary Society.

Rev. John Arundel, Secretary to the London Missionary Society.

Rev. John Dyer, Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society.

The Executive Committee, consisting of eight laymen and four clergymen of London, and the officers of the Society, conduct the business of the Institution.

The book department is perhaps the most valuable and important. The works issued, although chiefly religious, are not exclusively so. They have a valuable volume in duodecimo, on Natural History, designed specially to throw light upon the Bible. It is a popular introduction to the study of Quadrupeds, on scientific principles, with 100 engravings. Another on Birds, Fishes, &c. Also Books of Christian Travellers. There are twelve handsome volumes of the Lives of the Reformers, and six of Ecclesiastical History. They have republished several American works. Sprague's Letters to a Daughter, Hall on Education, Bedel's "Is it Well?" Todd's Lectures to Children," "The Young Christian," "Mother at Home," &c.

The arrangement of their publications is very systematic and on a grand scale. The issues are made once a month. The distribution is made all over the kingdom; so that on the first day of each month the publications may be obtained in almost every town and village; and the impression which they thus make, is nearly simultaneous throughout the nation. In this way, five, ten, and in some instances, twenty thousand volumes, in a very short space of time, are producing their effect upon the multitude of their readers.

A year or two since, having published a beautiful edition of "Wilberforce's Practical View," the Committee received an anonymous order (containing a check for a sufficient amount,) to distribute *three thousand copies* among distinguished men in the realm, including the members of Parliament.

Much attention is paid to books for the young; and a large number of the volumes are devoted to them. All the books are executed in the most tasteful and serviceable manner, and are an ornament to any parlour. Many of them are not surpassed in style, or in the excellence or richness of their embellishments, by any specimens of typography or engraving.

Notwithstanding the vast number of single volumes which they sell, they are continually planting entire libraries for circulation, not only in Great Britain, but in other parts of the world. In almost every spot where the English language is spoken, the influence of their publications is felt. Nor

are they confined to English readers. They have publications in more than *seventy-five* different languages. China, Siam, Burmah, the E. Indies, Armenia, Georgia, Australasia, Polynesia, Spanish America, the West Indies, Africa, France, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Gibralter, Malta, Corfu, and many other lands are receiving, through this Society the translated treasures of English talent and piety.

The Society issues three Periodicals, the Weekly Visiter; the Magazine and the Child's Companion, monthly. Of the two last, they have circulated 20,000 and 30,000 copies. From the profits of these two works alone, the Committee were enabled to distribute £150, in useful publications, in China, the E. Indies, France and Spain.

The total circulation of the Society's publications, throughout the world, in about *eighty* different languages, exceeds TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN MILLIONS.

The Society has more than three hundred and fifty auxiliaries or branch Societies in Great Britain, and more than fifty in foreign lands.

They have published books for the young in foreign languages, containing the most valuable truths, and made attractive by engravings. A few years since, they sent seventy-nine thousand publications of this description, in Spanish, to Mexico. They were purchased with great avidity.

The operations of the Society are conducted on business principles, and their works are purchased and sold by the Booksellers, at the same rates of discount as they allow each other.

All the benevolent income of the Society is expended by the Committee, in furnishing their Circulating Library to destitute places, at reduced prices, or in gratuitous appropriations at home or abroad.

The total receipts of the Society, from sales, &c., during the last three years, were as follows :—

	1833.	1834.	1835.	1836.
In pounds sterling,	£40,000.	£48,299.	£56,370.	£63,034.
In dollars at par,	$177,600.	$214,448.	$250,283.	$279,870.

3. THE SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

The Officers are,

Chairman of the Committee, The Right Hon. Lord Brougham, F. R. S.
Vice-Chairman, The Right Hon. Sir Henry Parnell, Bart. M. P.
Treasurer, William Tooke, Esq. M. P., F. R. S.

The Central Committee at London consists of fifty-five. There are also seventy-two local Committees, embracing more than one hundred and forty distinguished individuals, in different parts of the kingdom.

This Society had its origin in 1827. The Prospectus issued by the Committee, declared its exclusive object to be, to "impart useful information to all classes of the community, particularly to such as were unable to avail themselves of experienced teachers, or who might prefer learning by themselves." "The plan proposed for the attainment of this object, was the periodical publication of Treatises under the direction and with the sanction of a superintending committee;" no Treatise to be sanctioned by them, which should "contain any matter of controversial Divinity," or that should "interfere with the principles of Revealed Religion."

The Committee frankly stated in their address to the public, that although they should abstain from publishing works on religious subjects, and should confine their labours to aiding the progress of general knowledge, it was with a firm and gratifying conviction of its beneficial effect, upon all classes, by the indefinite increase of mental enjoyment, the proportionate diminution of gross and degrading indulgencies, and the consequent advancement of morality and religion; that they were fully persuaded that the publications of the Society, by opening the mind and giving exercise to the reasoning faculties, would indirectly indeed, but most powerfully, co-operate in improving moral character, without which all intellectual attainments are vain, and all accession of worldly prosperity worthless and unstable.

At the close of the first year of their operations, the Committee announced to the public, "with much gratification, that eminent success had attended their exertions, — that all the preliminary difficulties of such an enterprise had been surmounted; and that all the necessary arrangements for publications on the most extensive scale, were completed."

"That within nine months after the first Treatise was issued, a regular circulation of *twenty thousand* copies was established; and considering that the subjects of all but three of the number, had been purely scientific, and could hold out but little temptation to the reader for mere amusement, they could not but infer that the desire for useful information was most extensively spread through the country, and called for increased exertions to lead it to proper ends.

"That the aid which the Committee were receiving from men of science

and letters, in all parts of the kingdom, while it reflected on the cultivators of sound learning the highest honour, it also removed the necessity of fixing any limits to the operations of the Society.

"That their success in endeavouring to make the most useful and exalted truths of science easily and generally accessible, encouraged them to extend their plans, and to present to the public, subjects of more extensive interest than those of pure science.

"That they proposed to incorporate a series of works, embracing History and Biography; in which the exhibition of *truth* should be the primary object. They had engaged, in this department, the services of authors, in whose talents and principles the community might safely confide, and whose productions, the Committee had just ground to expect would preserve the *true spirit of history*.

"The Committee did not profess to be answerable for the perfect accuracy of every scientific Treatise, in all its details, nor could they vouch for the exact conformity of the representations, which different authors might make of the same historical periods or characters. The degree of superintendence which they engaged to exercise, in Scientific, Historical, or Biographical Works, was such as to secure that no publication should be inconsistent with the general principles of the Society, or conflict with that love of peace and freedom, which it was one of their first objects to promote.

"Subject to this general superintendence, the Committee conceived that the objects of the Society would be better promoted by placing before the readers of its publications, the sentiments of able and liberal men, and thus enabling them to form their own conclusions, as well from the difference as from the agreement of the writers; than by proposing to them, as if from authority, any fixed rule of judgement, or one uniform set of opinions.

"That the Committee, therefore, would feel disposed, if the general effect of a work was favourable to the objects of the Society, to direct its publication; the details to be regarded as the author's alone, and the opinions expressed on any particular question, to be considered as his, and not those of the Committee."

Another department which the Committee proposed to add was a *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*. "They conceived that much of the reading usually gone through for mere amusement, might be made a source of great improvement. In this series they intended to combine the two objects of instruction and amusement, uniting as much entertaining matter as can be given along with useful knowledge, and as much knowledge as can be conveyed in an amusing form."

The next object they had in view was, *books for the young*. They saw and felt together with all acquainted with the practical management of children, how extremely imperfect and indeed pernicious, were most of the books first put into their hands. The most ridiculous and unmeaning things

are to be learnt at an age, when the memory most easily receives impressions, and the season is worse than lost, for imprinting on it useful lessons, which might last forever. They felt that the bad effects of improper books for youth, on individual character and happiness, could hardly be exaggerated. And it was one of their objects, not only to endeavour to remedy this evil, and to multiply good and wholesome books for the use of children, but to pursue measures, for the more general diffusion of right principles upon this very important branch of education.

Another design they had in view, was to substitute a better thing for the miserable popular almanacs, full of the grossest errors, prophecies, and absurdities. One of these had the extraordinary sale of nearly *half a million*, extending and perpetuating the folly of hieroglyphics and astrology. "The British Almanac" and "Companion" to the same; two, perhaps, as valuable works in the department as can be found in the world, were the result of their labours.

Much attention of the Committee was occupied, in extending information as to the objects of the Society, and promoting the perusal of its publications, by means of correspondence, agencies, auxiliary societies, and reading associations; and they relied much on the subscribers for co-operation and aid in this important branch of their labours. In foreign parts, they had found the friends of education ready to unite their efforts with those of the Society. In France, some of the publications were regularly translated.

The following summary view of their plan, exhibits more clearly its nature and extent.

1. Each Scientific Treatise to contain an exposition of the fundamental principles of some branch of science — their proofs and illustrations — their application to practical uses, and to the explanation of facts or appearances.

2. For this purpose, the greater divisions of knowledge to be subdivided into branches, — any subdivision or branch to be continued in a second Treatise, if necessary for a sufficient elucidation.

3. Thus the great division of Natural Knowledge, commonly called Natural Philosophy, would be subdivided into different branches, as Elementary Astronomy, Mechanical Powers, Application of these to Machinery, Hydrostatics, Hydraulics, Pneumatics, Optics, Electricity, Magnetism, &c.; and thus onward, with occasionally a separate Practical Treatise, to the higher branches of Natural Philosophy; — the object being to furnish the means of acquiring, step by step, the whole of any department of Science, to the study of which, interest or inclination might lead. Reference to be made to works where the subjects treated are more fully discussed. The Treatises to be furnished with neat Engravings on wood, and Tables.

THE PLAN OF PUBLICATIONS PROPOSED IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. LIBRARY OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

Astronomy, Plane and Physical.
Geology.
Geography, Mathematical, Physical, and Political.
Magnetism.
Galvanism.
Mechanics.
Hydrostatics.
Hydraulics.
Pneumatics.
Heat.
Optics.
Animal Mechanics.
Electricity.
Vegetable Physiology.
Chemistry.
Mineralogy.
Meteorology.
Navigation.
Surveying.

Botany.
Architecture.
Dynamics.
Hydro-Dynamics.
Scientific Instruments.
" Apparatus.
" Processes.
Steam Engine.
Mill Work.
Dying.
Bleaching.
Assaying.
Chemical Functions of Animals.
" " Vegetables.
Physiology, Animal and Vegetable.
Thermometer and Barometer.
Familiar account of Newton's Principia.
Familiar account of La Place's Mecanique Celeste.
&c., &c., &c.

PURE MATHEMATICS.

Arithmetic and Algebra.
Geometry, Plane and Solid.
Trigonometry, Plane and Spherical.
The higher Algebra and its application.

Calculus, Integral, Differential, and of Variations.
Differences and Series.

INTELLECTUAL PHILOSOPHY.

Fundamental Principles of Human Knowledge.
Association of Ideas, and Habit.
Signs of Thought, Natural and Arbitrary.

Grammar — Language.
Judgement and Reasoning.
Evidence and Belief; Conduct of the Understanding.

ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.

Pains and Pleasures.
Motives.

Classification of Human Actions.
Human Obligations.

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

Objects of Government and its means.
Legislative, Judicial, Administrative Powers.

Jurisprudence, Civil, Criminal, Preliminary (Police.)
Political Economy.

HISTORY OF SCIENCE.

Mathematics, Natural Philosophy.
Astronomy, Chemistry.

Anatomy, Metaphysics.
Ethics, Religion, Law.

HISTORY OF ART.

Useful Arts.
Fine Arts.
Navigation.

War.
Commerce.
Manufactures.

HISTORY OF NATIONS.

1. Outline of General History.
2. Greece.
3. Italy and the Roman Empire.
4. Eastern Empire.
5. The Saracens.
6. English History.
   - England.
   - Scotland.
   - Ireland.
7. Germany.
8. France.
9. Netherlands, Holland, &c.
10. Switzerland.
11. Spain.
12. Portugal.
14. Denmark, Norway, Sweden.
15. Prussia.
16. Seljucks, Moguls, Tartars, &c.
17. China.
18. Ottoman Turks.
19. Hindostan.
20. America.
21. Revolution of North America.
22. British Colonies.

HISTORY OF INDIVIDUALS.

Patriots.

Bruce.	Hampden.	Lord Falkland.
De Witt.	Sydney.	Paoli.
William Tell.	Russell.	Washington, &c.

Warriors.

Black Prince.	Wolfe.	Rodney.
Gustavus Adolphus.	Abercrombie.	Nelson.
Marlborough.	Blake.	St. Vincent.
Turenne.	De Ruyter.	Duncan.

Discoverers.

Gallileo.	Kepler.	Black.
Copernicus.	Newton.	Cavendish.
Bacon.	Leibnitz.	Priestley.
Tycho Brahe.	Hervey.	Lavoisier.
Franklin.	Rennie.	Arkwright.
Brindley.	Watt.	Smeaton.

Moral Philosophers.

Locke.	Berkeley.	Turgot.
Malbranche.	Grotius.	Smith.

Navigators.

Columbus.	Vaco di Gama.	Cook.
Drake.	Anson.	La Perouse.

Statesmen.

Wolsey.	Sully.	Somers.
Burleigh.	O. Cromwell.	Chatham.

2. FARMERS' SERIES.

To consist of a series of publications, on different subjects connected with domestic and rural economy; with the design of affording to the farmer, the labourer, and the cottager, all the information necessary for well understanding the history, nature, and management of the different domestic animals and their productions; and to give an account of the nature and properties of all trees, plants, and vegetables, usually cultivated for food or profit.

The Committee remark, that less pains have been taken to afford useful information to the husbandman, on subjects connected with his pursuits, than have been bestowed on furnishing information to manufacturers and artizans, while the long winter evenings of those who live in the country, employed in husbandry, afford opportunities peculiarly favourable for acquiring knowledge on all subjects connected with their employments, their interests, and their happiness.

The first division of the series to contain a history of the treatment and management of animals useful to man, and an account of those injurious to him. Of the domestic animals a plain and familiar account to be given, of their history, structure, food, habits and diseases; of the way to preserve them in a healthy and useful state; of the best application of their strength, illustrated on the principles of Mechanical Science;—and of the means requisite to secure all the benefits they confer upon man, in articles of food and raiment. In doing this, free use to be made of facts and Natural History, and the principles of Mechanics, and of Chemistry, to be oftened explained. The works to be interspersed with curious and interesting facts and anecdotes; with drawings of animals, implements, buildings, &c., for purposes of amusement and illustration.

"It is impossible," says the prospectus, to enter into a detailed statement of the structure and habits of animals, without meeting, at every step, the most impressive proofs of Divine wisdom: it needs scarcely to be observed, that to trace and illustrate these evidences, will form an important part of this series of the Society's Treatises.

Specimen of the General Arrangement of the First Division of the Farmers' Series.

USEFUL AND HURTFUL ANIMALS.

1. *In aiding the power of Man.*
   - Horse,
   - Ox,
   - Ass,
   - Mule,
   - Dog, &c.
2. *In supplying Food and Raiment.*
   - Horned Cattle,
   - Sheep,
   - Swine,
   - Goats,
   - Bees,
   - Rabbits,
   - Hares,
   - Fish,
   - Poultry.
3. *Hurtful.*
   - Fox,
   - Polecat,
   - Weazel,
   - Badger,
   - Mole,
   - Rat,
   - Mice,
   - Insects,
   - Worms.

THE HORSE.

I. Structure, functions, and habits, particularly with reference to what renders this animal useful to man.

V. Treatment when fit for work.
   1. Food.
   2. Stabling.

II. The kind best fitted for
    1. The Road.
    2. The Plough and Cart.
    3. Shoeing
    4. Yoking.
III. Rules for judging of their age, strength, &c.
IV. Breeding and treatment when young.
VI. Diseases.
    1. Prevention.
    2. Symptoms.
    3. Remedies.

CATTLE.

I. Structure, functions, and habits.
II. Kinds best adapted for
    1. Different soils and climates.
    2. For giving much or rich milk.
    3. For the butcher.
III. Rules for judging of.
IV. Breeding and fattening Calves.
V. Treatment, food, &c.
VI. Diseases, &c.

DAIRY.

I. Chemical principles of milk.
II. Butter and cheese — best mode of making; explanation of the process
III. Milk, cheese, and butter, as articles of diet.

COMMON POULTRY.

I. Structure, functions, habits.
II. Different kinds.
III. Rules for judging of.
IV. Hen-houses — Breeding.
V. Feeding.
VI. Diseases.
VII. Eggs.
VIII. Feathers.

HONEY-BEE.

I. Structure, &c.
II. Construction and site of bee-hives.
III. Treatment.
IV. Diseases and enemies.
V. Taking the honey.
    1. Honey, as an article of diet.
    2. Making of mead — its properties.

Subjects to be treated of in Subsequent Divisions.

1. General Principles of Agriculture.
2. Agricultural Buildings and Machinery.
3. Hop Planting.
4. Sheep Farming.
5. Dairy Farming and Cheese Making.
6. Wood and Timber.
7. Potatoes, Cabbage, and Spade Husbandry.
8. Farriery.
9. Road Making.
10. Bridge Building.

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3. LIBRARY OF ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

A series of Books to meet the wants of that numerous class of readers, in every condition of life, who are desirous to attain knowledge chiefly through the medium of amusement. The *Library of Useful Knowledge*, furnishing the requisite means for those who desire by diligent reading and study, to inform themselves in Sciences and in History.

This series is designed to be a repository of those numerous and interesting facts in Science and Literature, which are too scattered to be arranged in a systematic treatise,

and which convey much useful information in an amusing form. The object is to present the most attractive parts of knowledge, to those who from want of time or habit of study, are reluctant to make *mental effort*, and lead them to appreciate the value of a full and systematic pursuit of those studies, which instead of being dry and repulsive, afford great delight and improvement.

Among the subjects to be treated in this Library, the following are named:

The Menageries.
Natural History of Insects.
Natural History of Birds.
History and Description of Substances used in the Arts.
History of Inventions aud Discoveries.
The Monuments of Architecture.
The pursuit of Knowledge, illustrated by anecdotes of remarkable persons.
Historical Scenes and Portraits, or accounts of extraordinary actions and characters.
Interesting Trials.

4. THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.
5. BRITISH ALMANAC AND COMPANION.
6. A SERIES OF MAPS.
7. TREATISE ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

Address to Labourers, more than 140,000 copies sold.
Results of Machinery.
Rights of Industry.
Rights of Property.
Division of Employment.
Exchanges on Equivalents.
Population.
Private Consumption, &c.
Public Consumption.

The grand experiment of the Penny Magazine, and its splendid success in this country, as well as in England, are well known. It was a bold and noble conception,—that of publishing a magazine which would require fifty thousand subscribers to pay its expenses. But its unparalleled success was the commencement of a new era in the *diffusion* of knowledge among mankind. Previous to the birth of this magazine, the Periodical Literature of the world could scarcely show a work which numbered as many thousands subscribers as there are days in the week.* But in England and America only, the Penny Magazine has poured forth from the press, by nearly as many thousands as there are days in the year: and if we estimate the translations in other languages, and the copies of its articles in other works, and all its influence direct and indirect, it may be doubted, if any single instrumentality has ever before done so much, towards opening the sources and the blessings of knowledge, to the great mass of the people.

The Committee, in speaking of the happy effects of the plan of rendering good books generally accessible by their cheapness, suggested an enlargement of the sphere of the Society's operations. And in acknowledging the assistance, which they had derived from different quarters, they say, they "are happy to state, that in the United States, in Paris, in the Ionian Islands, and in Norway, they have efficient and zealous correspondents.

The design of these Associations, which have been described, is, as will at once be perceived, the *diffusion* of knowledge already attained. It may be well to enumerate also here, a few of the more prominent Societies now flourishing in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe, whose object is the *advancement* of literature and science, by stimulating research and thus promoting discovery.

* Newspapers, of course, are not here considered.

4. THE ENGLISH STATISTICAL SOCIETY.

The substance of the Prospectus of its objects, and plan of operation, is as follows :

1. Objects. To procure, arrange, and publish facts calculated to illustrate the condition and prospects of society, with a view to the ultimate detection of the causes which, whether politically, morally, or physically, promote or prejudice the well-being of individual communities, or whole nations. *Facts*, in contradistinction from opinions, will receive its exclusive attention.

2. Plan of operations. I. To subdivide and organize the general council of the Society, in such a manner as to enable the council to deal conveniently with all the subdivisions of the subject matter before it. These subdivisions will necessarily be numerous, but are embraced in Four Great Classes ; namely,

1. Economical Statistics.
2. Political Statistics.
3. Medical Statistics.
4. Moral and Intellectual Statistics.

The first class, *Economical Statistics*, comprehends —

1. The Statistics of the natural productions and agriculture of nations.
2. " of manufactures.
3. " of commerce and currency.
4. " of the distribution of wealth, or all facts relating to rent, wages, profit, &c.

Political Statistics, furnish three subdivisions —

1. Facts relating to the elements of political constitutions, the number of electors, jurors, &c.
2. Legal Statistics.
3. Statistics of finance, of national expenditure, and of civil and military establishments.

Medical Statistics, including the great subject of Population, so nearly allied to it, will require several subdivisions.

Moral and Intellectual Statistics, embraces —

1. The Statistics of literature.
2. " of education.
3. " of religious instruction and ecclesiastical institutions.
4. " of crime.

These leading subdivisions to be assigned to distinct subdivisions of the council. The Society, as soon as possible, to open communication with the Statistical Department, established by Government at the Board of Trade.

One of its first steps towards collecting fresh statistical information, will be to draw up a good set of interrogatories. It is difficult to overrate the importance of such a measure, in the accumulation of knowledge from all

quarters of the globe. The preparation and publication of such a set of questions, will be as laborious as it is important, and will probably form the chief object of the exertions of the council, during the first year of the Society's existence.

The Society will also open correspondence, with such societies, at home and abroad, as may appear qualified to collect or furnish statistical details.

An important part of the labours of the council will be, the arranging, condensing, and publishing information, already in existence, but either unpublished, or published only in an expensive or diffused form, or in foreign languages.

The collection of a complete statistical library will also be carried on as rapidly, as the funds will admit.

5. OTHER BRITISH SOCIETIES.

1. The Royal Society, incorporated by Charles II. in 1663, by the appellation of "President, *Council, and Fellows of the Royal Society of London, for improving Natural Knowledge.*" Its origin is attributed to Hon. Robert Boyle, Sir William Petty, and others. The charter ordains that the council shall always consist of *twenty-one* persons, (the President always one.) Each member pays an admission fee of eight guineas, and is subject to an annual tax of five guineas, unless he redeem it, by paying, at once, fifty guineas. It publishes an annual volume in two parts, "The Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society of London." Men of all ranks and professions have vied in promoting its designs, by communicating every thing in their power relating to natural and artificial discoveries. It has received also, more than once, the aid of royal endowment. The library and museum are worthy of the institution. There are 750 members.

2. The Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce; formed in 1754. The chief object of this Society is to promote these interests, by encouraging useful inventions, discoveries, and improvements. The institution consists of a President, sixteen Vice-Presidents, two chairmen of each of the Committees, a principal and assistant Secretary, a housekeeper, a collector, a messenger, and members. In pursuance of its objects, they have expended upwards of £50,000, derived from voluntary subscriptions and legacies. No invention or improvement, for which a patent is obtained, can receive patronage from the Society, as every object which it promotes, must be laid open for *public* use and inspec-

Moore

tion. The Society publishes an annual volume of its transactions. The great room of the Society, is filled with a series of ornamental paintings, illustrating the motto, "*The attainment of happiness, individual and public, depends on the cultivation of the human faculties.*"

There are *nine* Committees, divided into several classes; Committees on Agriculture, Manufactures, Mechanics, Trade, Chemistry, Mineralogy, Dyeing; on polite and liberal Arts; on papers, correspondence, miscellaneous matters, accounts, &c. They publish an annual volume of their transactions.

3. The Royal Society of Literature. This institution commenced operations in 1833, under the patronage of George IV. Its object is, "the advancement of literature, as conducing to the interest and happiness of mankind, by the publication of works of great intrinsic value, but not of that popular character, which usually claims the attention of publishers; — by the promotion of discoveries in literature; — by endeavouring, as far as practicable, to fix the standard, and to preserve the purity of our language; — by the critical improvement of lexicography; — by the reading at public meetings, of interesting papers on history, philosophy, philology, and the arts, and the publication of such of those papers as shall be approved of, in the Society's transactions; by the assigning of honorary rewards, to the authors of works of literary merit, and important discoveries in literature; — and by establishing correspondence with learned men in foreign countries, for the purpose of literary inquiry and information."

The Society consists of Fellows and Associates, the latter being divided into *ten* Royal associates, who each receive 100 guineas per annum from the privy purse; and *ten* Society associates, who are appointed on the funds of the Society. Besides these, there are honorary associates. The management of the Society is vested in a Council, consisting of the President, Vice-President, and a certain number of the fellows. Meetings every fortnight, except in midsummer. There are 271 members.

4. The Royal Institution of Great Britain. This was formed in 1800, under the patronage of George III, and incorporated by royal charter, for the purpose of "Diffusing the knowledge, and facilitating the general introduction of useful mechanical inventions and improvements, and for teaching, by courses of philosophical lectures and experiments, the application of science to the common purposes of life."

The investigations and important discoveries of Sir Humphrey Davy, who lectured here, have conferred great celebrity on this establishment. There are 758 members.

5. The London Institution, received the royal charter in 1807. Its objects are "the acquisition of an extensive library of the most valuable books in all languages, ancient and modern; — the establishment of rooms for newspapers and other periodical journals, foreign and domestic; — the general diffusion of Science, Literature, and the Arts."

To accomplish its purposes, nearly 1000 gentlemen and merchants subscribed 75 guineas each, for the supply of requisite funds. The entire subscription was nearly £80,000. The annual subscription is 3 guineas. The affairs of the Institution are conducted by a Committee of twenty-six.

The ground floor of the elegant stone edifice is entirely occupied, by the entrance hall, decorated with pilasters and columns, the newspaper, magazine, and Committee rooms. A library, 97 feet by 42, is in the second story.

6. The Surrey Institution, founded in 1824, "for the general Diffusion of Literary and Scientific Knowledge." Proprietors and subscribers of three guineas a year, have access. 1. To the news-room, furnished with papers, gazettes, &c. 2. To the reading room, containing the literary journals, new books, pamphlets, &c. 3. To the lectures. 4. To the laboratory. 5. To the library of reference. 6. To the library of circulation.

7. The London Literary Institution, established in 1825, for the diffusion of Literature and Science, among commercial and professional young men.

8. The Mechanic's Institution, founded 1823, by liberal donations from public spirited and patriotic individuals, for the purpose of "diffusing a knowledge of the principles of the Arts and Sciences, among the mechanics of London, to promote the progress of useful general knowledge among them."

9. British Association for the advancement of Science. The objects and plan of this Association are too well known to need a particular description. The following extract, however, from Prof. Hamilton's annual report at the meeting in Dublin, in 1835, conveys an idea of the magnificent extent of its design, which cannot fail to interest every one.

'This Institution,' he remarks, 'differs, in its magnitude and universality, from all others. What other Societies do upon a small scale, this does upon a large one. What others do for London, or Edinburgh, or Dnblin, this does for the whole triple realm of England, Scotland, and Ireland, its gigantic arms stretching even to America and India, inasmuch as it is com-

mensurate with the magnitude and majesty of the British empire, on which the sun never sets. But it is not merely in its magnitude and universality, and consequently higher power of stimulating intellect through sympathy, that this Association differs from others. It differs also from all others in its constitution and details, in the migratory character of its meetings, which visit for a week each year, place after place in succession, so as to indulge and stimulate all, without wearying or burdening any. * * * * * In calling upon eminent men to prepare reports upon the existing state of knowledge in the principal departments of science; in short, in attempting to induce men of science to work more together than they do elsewhere; to establish a system of more strict co-operation between the labourers in one common field, and thus to effect more fully than other societies can do, the combination of intellectual exertions, so that the labours of the several members are made to combine and harmonize together. * * * * Express requests are also systematically made to individuals and bodies of men to co-operate in the execution of particular tasks in science, and these requests are often complied with.

The reports which this Association have called forth, upon the existing state of several branches of knowledge, are astonishing examples of industry and zeal, exerted in the spirit and for the purpose of co-operation.

The Association is divided into six sections, on the following subjects:

Section A. Mathematics and Gen. Physics.
" B. Chemistry and Minerology.
" C. Geology and Geography.
" D. Natural History.
" E. Anatomy and Medicine.
" F. Statistics.

Note—There are besides the above, other miscellaneous Literary and Scientific Societies, as follows:

The Zoological Society; number of members, 2446.
The Linnæn Society, incorporated in 1802. Object, Natural History.
The British Minerological Soeiety. (1799.)
The Entomological Society. (1806.)
The Mathematical Society.
The Philosophical Society of London. (1810.)
The Geological Society. (1813.) Several volumes of its transactions published.
The Horticultural Society. (1804.) Number of members 1875.
The Board of Agriculture. (1793.)
The City Philosophical Society.
The Astronomical Society. (1820.)
The Medical and Chirurgical Society. (1805.)
The Meteorological Society.
The Philological Society.
The Royal Geographical Society.
The Royal Asiatic Society, instituted for the investigation and encouragement of Arts, Sciences and Literature, with respect to Asia.

The number and variety of lectures and papers, to which these Institutions have given origin, have proved highly beneficial to Science.

6. FRENCH SOCIETIES.

1. THE INSTITUTE, OR ROYAL ACADEMY. Created in 1795. It originally consisted of three academies. It was re-constituted in 1803, and divided into four great classes, which are in effect, so many distinct Societies. They are,

1. *The Royal Academy of Sciences.* This is composed of eleven sections, embracing 62 members: viz. Geometry, 6 members; Mechanics, 6; Astronomy, 6; Geography and Navigation, 3; Philosophy, 6; Chemistry, 6; Mineralogy, 6; Botany, 6; Rural Economy and the Veterinary Art, 6; Anatomy and Zoology, 6; Medicine and Surgery, 6. This academy distributes prizes on Statistics, Experimental Philosophy and Mechanics; for improvements, and useful works or discoveries made in the course of the year. This academy holds its sittings every Monday, from three to five.

2. Sometimes called the *Ancient French Academy.* It has 40 members, who are employed on French literature, and the French language. It is charged with the compilation of a dictionary in the French language, and the examination of literary and historical works. This academy disposes of an annual prize of 1500 francs, for the best production on a subject proposed the preceding year, and other prizes, one for the work most useful to public morals. It sits every Thursday, from half-past two till half-past four.

3. *The Royal Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres.* This has 40 members, eight associates and sixty correspondents. It meets every Wednesday, and distributes an annual prize of 1500 francs.

4. *The Royal Academy of the Fine Arts.* This has also 40 members, and is divided into five sections; viz. Painting, 14 members; Sculpture, 8; Architecture, 8; Engraving, 4; Musical Composition, 6. They meet weekly.

Each academy has its own regulations, and its own Secretary. The first has two Secretaries. Each academy is perfectly independent of the other; but the hall, the agency, the Secretary's office, the library. &c., are common to the whole. The interests and the funds, common to the four, are managed by a Committee formed of two members from each, presided by the Minister of the Interior. Each academy ballots to fill its own vacancies, and the choice is submitted to the approbation of the king. Members of one academy are eligible to the others, and each member receives a salary of 1500 francs. The united public meeting of the four academies takes place annually on the first of May.

This institution was established during the reign of Louis XIV, and is composed of the most distinguished philosophers, literary characters, and

artists of France, and corresponds with the learned of every nation. These academies have acquired great reputation, and have exerted a powerful influence on French and European literature and science.

2. The Athenæum of Arts. Instituted in 1792. It embraces in its objects, every literary and scientific topic, but its principal object is the encouragement of the Arts and Manufactures. It has been said, that no institution has more benefitted Society, or acquired a higher, or better deserved reputation.

It is divided into six classes; Literature and Political economy; the Pleasing and Fine Arts; Mathematics and Physics, which come under consideration on different appointed days.

3. The Athenæum of Paris. This embraces the most eminent men in every department of science. It was instituted in 1784, and the distinguished and learned lecturers, who have been connected with it, have given it great celebrity, The library, the cabinets of Natural History, Mineralogy and Chemistry, are valuable. It is supported by annual subscriptions of 120 francs.

4. The Society for the encouragement of National Industry. Founded in 1802. The object is the melioration of every branch of French industry. It is formed of an unlimited number of members, who pay an annual subscription of 36 francs. Among its members are most of the ministers of State, many public functionaries, the first men of property, and many of the most celebrated literary characters. It publishes, yearly, a bulletin, distributed exclusively to the members of the Society, containing notices of improvements made in France and foreign countries. The Society meets semi-annually, and the council, who manage it, once a fortnight The prizes announced for 1834, amounted to more than 70,000 francs.

5. The Royal and Central Society of Agriculture. Established 1761. The object is the improvement of the different branches of rural and domestic economy. It is the central point of correspondence for the agricultural Societies of the kingdom. There are 40 ordinary, 24 free, and 12 foreign associates, with an unlimited number of native and foreign correspondents. Meetings are held twice a month. The king is the patron.

6. The French Society of Universal Statistics. Founded in 1829, to aid the progress of Statistics and the developement of every branch of human knowledge. It is composed of Titular, Honorary, and Corresponding members. Titular members pay 300 francs, or 30 francs annually Honorary members pay 150, or 15 annually. Corresponding members purchase a diploma, which costs 25 francs. The Society publishes a

monthly journal, and a collection of memoirs, which are distributed gratuitously to the Titular and Honorary members. Prizes, of gold, silver and bronze medals are distributed annually to authors of works entitled to disinction, which are printed at the expense of the Society.

7. The Athenæum of Foreigners. Formed for the prosecution of every branch of science and literature, and in every language.

8. The Horticultural Society. Established in 1827, to promote the improvement of kitchen and pleasure gardens, the cultivation of fruit trees, plants and vegetables, destined for food, roots susceptible of employment in the arts, etc. It publishes a monthly journal, distributed gratis to members. The annual subscription of members is 30 francs.

9. The Geographical Society. This consists of an indefinite number of members, who pay 25 francs entry, and an annual subscription of 36 francs. It publishes monthly, a Geographical bulletin, gratis to members ; and a collection of memoirs, which they may procure at half-price, all aiming at the promotion of Geographical Knowledge.

10. The National Education Society. This Society is engaged in the perfecting every branch of instruction, and meditates a complete system of national public education. To this end it has established an "orthomathique" school. Members pay 25 francs per annum, and receive gratis, a bulletin and journal of education.

11. The Asiatic Society ; for the encouragement of the Asiatic languages. The mininum subscription of members is 30 francs, which entitles them to a copy of the "Journal Asiatique," published every month, and to the privilege of purchasing, at cost price, the works printed by the Society.

12. The Society for the formation and improvement of elementary Schools in France. Subscription of members 25 francs per annum, and entitles the subscriber to receive the monthly publications of the Society.

13. The Royal Academical Society of Sciences. Devoted to the improvement of the Sciences, Arts and Literature, and embraces many of the most distinguished literati of France.

14. The Society of Belles Lettres.

15. The Society of the Institution, &c. &c.

Blanchard

CONCLUSION.

Our object in presenting these sketches of European Societies, has been to show how much talent and philanthropic enterprise are employed abroad, in associated efforts to advance the interests of literature, science, and the arts; and to diffuse among all classes of the community, select publications, adapted to the popular taste, and calculated to promote the highest welfare of men.

If in England, such Societies have been found desirable, and such results have attended their labours, surely similar ones may exert a most valuable influence, in a country like ours, where intelligence and virtue are acknowledged, by common consent, to be the only pillars of all that is valuable in our Institutions.

The already protracted length of this pamphlet, precludes any further notice of foreign Societies, or the insertion of Statistics relative to the progress of the Press in our own and other countries. Suffice it to say, that the annual issues of the English Press, average about twelve hundred volumes: those of the French and German, five thousand each. In ten years to come, estimating from the increase during ten years past, there will be issued in England, France, and Germany, more than *one hundred and fifty thousand* new books.

There are more than eighty periodicals in Great Britain, devoted to all the various departments of useful human knowledge. Many of them are conducted with great ability. The number also in France and Germany is very considerable.

From all these foreign resources, as well as from the increasing productions of American talent, the Committee hope to bring together, and to issue in the most attractive and substantial manner, whatever may subserve the best interests of society, in its social, intellectual, and moral relations.

The details of the proposed plan of operations, are necessarily left, to be determined, as the enterprise proceeds. The course pursued by the Societies which have been described, suggests many things, which may properly engage the attention of this.

The first great object of the Society, is the publication of a Library for the Schools of our country, designed to embrace when completed a few hundred volumes, written & compiled

with special reference to the wants of the youth of our country. It will include in the range of its subjects works in the various departments of knowledge most interesting and useful to the great body of the people, including history, voyages and travels, biography, natural history, the physical, intellectual, moral, and political sciences, agriculture, manufactures, arts, commerce, the belles lettres, and the history and philosophy of education;

the whole to be prepared with a view to the different ages, tastes, circumstances & capacities of readers. The Committee have already adopted & published under their sanction, a Library of 50 vols, selected with much care from existing publications, to meet the immediate wants of our schools, while they go on ~~without delay~~ as fast as possible to complete the plan announced in their published prospectus. They present to the country the first ~~50~~ fifty volumes, chiefly standard works

~~works~~ of permanent interest and value, which have already received extensively the public approbation in this country and in Europe, as the commencement of the series, to be extended from time to time, until it shall comprise a well-selected and comprehensive Library of Useful Knowledge, worthy of a place in every schoolroom of our country.

It will be the greatest care of the Committee, that the whole be pervaded and characterized by a spirit of Christian morality calculated to refine and elevate the moral character of our nation.

The committee are now making arrangements with authors in different parts of the

United States, for the preparation of various works, ~~and especially for proposing plans of works~~ adapted to the purposes of the Society.

A Library for Mechanics, another for Farmers, one for Seamen, one for Children, &c. &c. will engage attention so soon as they can be advantageously commenced. Some of the proposed works, it is intended to carry through the press as speedily as they can be prepared.

It is expected also that the ~~Secretary will proceed to Europe, to~~ Society will take measures to obtain in England and France such facilities as can be commanded there, for the efficient prosecution of the objects in view, by correspondence ~~He will confer extensively~~ with authors, publishers, and publishing institutions; by importing ~~purchase~~ books, ~~and make such inquiries in respect to~~ stereotype, ~~plates~~ cuts, engravings and artists, ~~as shall enable the Society~~ to avail itself of all the advantages which can be derived from that quarter, in carrying forward its designs.

~~It is expected that in the ensuing autumn, the Society will be prepared, after having received the Report of the Secretary, and examined such works and plans of works as shall be laid before them during the summer, to exhibit to the community a somewhat extended outline of their proposed operations. In the interim, they ask the co-operation of the friends of the Society, in raising a few thousand dollars to sustain these preliminary movements, and enable the Committee to carry on efficiently those parts of the plan which require immediate action.~~

The Executive Committee respectfully invite the attention of American philanthropists to this subject, and solicit their aid and co-operation in the great work proposed. They believe that the magnitude and importance of this undertaking justify the expectation that an enlightened and benevolent community will cheerfully furnish the necessary funds to prosecute the enterprise.

The Committee earnestly solicit that consideration of the subject, which its importance deserves, and will gladly receive from the reader of this Prospectus, such aid as he may be willing to render.

By order of the Executive Committee.

JAMES BROWN, *Chairman.*
TIMOTHY R. GREEN, *Secretary.*

GORHAM D. ABBOTT, *Secretary.*

New. York, ~~May~~ 1, 1837.

Feb. 1839.

(Here insert the Prospectus of the "American Library for Schools & Families.")

X

Robinson

PROSPECTUS

OF

THE AMERICAN LIBRARY

FOR

SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES.

The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge proposed from the commencement, to devote very early attention to the publication of a series of works, on the more important branches of popular knowledge, to be prepared and issued in a style and manner, suited to the purposes of a School Library. The primary object was, to have them placed as extensively as possible, in the common schools of the country, that they may be loaned to the children, and circulated through them among all the families of the districts. Some of the considerations which have led the Society to attach special importance to this plan, are the following:

1. The social, circulating library is unquestionably the most economical and efficient mode of supplying the means of knowledge, to the large mass of young persons between the ages of ten and twenty, in the common school districts, throughout the country, now almost wholly unprovided with books of general information.

2. This class of persons are at a period of life, in which the means of knowledge are of the highest interest and value. In youth, the powers of the mind are all in active exercise. Curiosity is awake; memory is faithful; the attention, not yet distracted by the engrossing cares of active life, gives itself wholly to its work. There is an ardour in the thirst for knowledge, which shows itself in the intense eagerness to *hear* and *know*; and many would seek constant gratification from books, if books could be obtained, of a character adapted to their taste and age. This period is the best time in life, for storing the mind with knowledge, and almost the only time to acquire a *taste* for its attainment in future years.

3. Such a library will be the means of great advantage and improvement to the schools with which they are connected. It will, in fact, add a new department to the system of education, the influence of which will extend to the whole population. It will concentrate interest in the schools, enlarge the sphere of the teacher's instruction and influence,

elevate his employment and office, connecting pleasant associations with it in the minds of the scholars and in the families to which they belong. It will raise the tone of literary interest and ambition among pupils, and relieve the dull routine of mere elementary instruction, by the pleasures of entertaining and useful knowledge. It will be a kind of connecting link, to unite the school with society around, and will naturally form the nucleus of an extended popular library, which by subsequent yearly additions, will contain the materials for a general acquaintance with all subjects of interest and benefit to the community.

4. It seems necessary, in order to carry out and complete the work of school education, to provide some such supply of the means of reading. The elementary branches taught in the classes, are rather the instruments by which knowledge is to be acquired, than the acquisition itself. They constitute the preliminary training of the mind, and when this is, in some good degree accomplished, how important that the pupil should have opportunity to employ his powers, in exploring the field of knowledge. The school teaches the boy to read; and gives him some elementary knowledge of various kinds which enables him to understand books. When this is acquired, we must give him the books, or our work is incomplete.

5. Such a library of simple, interesting and instructive works, would exert a vast influence in preserving the morals of the community. An entertaining book is one of the strongest keepers a child can have. Its chain is invisible, and it neither chafes nor annoys the wearer. But it is more effectual than almost any other restraint. How many hours would such libraries rescue from idleness; from wicked conversation; from open dissipation and vice? how many from noisy brawls and savage fights? And this, too, just in the most important crisis; for, if a young man's character is saved till he is twenty-one, it is in general saved for life. This plan also, by providing a source of enjoyment and improvement for all the members of a family *at home*, will strengthen the domestic relations and tend to revive and restore the love of domestic pursuits and pleasures. The experience of ages shows that mankind can exist safely and in happiness, only in the form of a vast congeries of *families;* and the more we can strengthen the *love of home*, and bring means of improvement and happiness to every man's fireside, and keep the inmates of the household at home, the better for the virtue and solid happiness of the community.

6. It will be a very effectual mode of supplying the population generally with the means of knowledge. Through the scholars, the books will find their way, in constant rotation, to all the families around; and many circumstances will conspire to cause them to be extensively read, by the adult population. Parents are always specially interested in their children's pursuits, and often like to read themselves what their children are reading. And the interesting nature of the subjects, the simplicity and directness of the style, and the practical utility which will every where be aimed at, will fit these works peculiarly to the wants of a large class of our population

too much engrossed with cares, or wearied with the toils of life, or of too little mental cultivation to engage in more extended studies.

7. The plan is a very economical one. The amount of useful result is very large, when compared with the expenditure. A book sold to an individual is commonly read but by few, and is then laid aside idle and useless. These books, on the contrary, will circulate continually, and be used by new readers in succession, till worn out. An edition of 1000 copies, in the ordinary way, will reach perhaps 5,000 or 10,000 minds. But on this plan, circulating among the families of a thousand districts, they will have opportunity to reach *several hundred thousand minds*. Indeed, if it were desired to make known a narrative of facts, as extensively as possible to the mass of a community, what cheaper or better mode could be devised, than to place a copy in every school to be loaned to the scholars in rotation? A sum not exceeding the ordinary endowment of a Professorship in one of our colleges, will found such a National Library; and enable the Society to perpetuate its blessings indefinitely among the *rising generation* in our country. Tens of thousands, in our day, hundreds of thousands, millions, yet unborn,—would have their minds expanded, and their characters formed, under its benignant influence. Such a library placed in every school in our country, would seem to be one of the most effectual and desirable measures for the general diffusion of knowledge and the improvement of society, that could possibly be devised. Its benefits would be incalculable. It seems to the Committee, that if the founders of such libraries as the Bodleian, the Harleian, and the Cottonian in England, had devoted one-half their munificent endowments in establishing a suitable library for the common people, with the means of giving it universal circulation among the towns and villages of our mother country, they would have accomplished incomparably more for the improvement and happiness of their countrymen and of the human race, than they have now done, by their princely gifts in the republic of letters.

And they cannot but express the hope that the immense importance of such a benefaction may attract the attention of the opulent in our country, and that patriotic individuals may be found willing to give their influence and a portion of their property to the great work of diffusing among all classes of their countrymen, and through many future generations, the elements of a sound and wholesome literature.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PROPOSED LIBRARY.

I. HISTORY.

Ancient.	American.
Modern.	United States.

II. VOYAGES AND TRAVELS.

Europe.	America.
Asia.	Polynesia.
Africa.	

III. BIOGRAPHY.

Ancient.	American.
Modern.	Self-Made Men.

IV. NATURAL HISTORY.

Geology.	Zoology.
Mineralogy.	Anthropology.
Botany.	Anatomy and Physiology.

V. PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

Astronomy.	Pneumatics.
Geography.	Optics and Acoustics.
Meteorology.	Light and Heat.
Mechanics.	Electricity.
Statics and Dynamics.	Galvanism.
Hydrostatics.	Magnetism.
Hydrodynamics.	Chemistry.
Hydraulics.	Hygiene.

VI. INTELLECTUAL SCIENCE.

Psychology.	History of Philosophy.
Ontology.	Logic.

VII. MORAL SCIENCE.

Natural Religion.	Principles of Morals.
Evidences of Christianity.	Ethics.

VIII. POLITICAL SCIENCE.

Natural Law.	American Government.
Law of Nations.	Political Economy for the Industrious Classes.
Government.	

Civil and Criminal Law.
Manual of Jurisprudence.
Political Economy.
Production and Consumption.
Rights of Industry.
Rights of Capital.
Finance and Banking.
Patents.
War.
Intemperance.
Gambling, Lotteries.
Prisons, Penitentiaries.
Frauds.
Empiricism.

IX. AGRICULTURE.

Soil, its varieties and culture.
The Vegetable Kingdom.
Timber and Wood.
Vegetables for the food of Man.
" " Animals.
Orcharding.
Horticulture.
Vegetable Physiology.
Chemical functions of Vegetables.
Management of Live Stock.
The Horse, Cattle, Sheep, Poultry.
The Honey Bee and Silk Worm.
Animal Mechanics.
Chemical functions of Animals.
Agricultural Economy.
Household Economy.
The Dairy.

X. MANUFACTURES.

Materials and Processes.
Results of Machinery.

XI. ARTS.

General Technology.
Application of Science to the Arts.
Fine and Ornamental Arts.
Useful Mechanic Arts.
Architecture and Building.
Road and Bridge Making.
Carriages.
Steam Engine, and its application.
Railroad and Canal.
Surveying.
Engineering.
Millwork.
Horology.
Scientific Instruments and Apparatus.

XII. COMMERCE.

Its History.
Articles of Commerce.
Navigation.
Effects upon Society.

XIII. BELLES LETTRES.

General Philology.
History of Literature.
Standard Works in Ancient and Modern Literature.

XIV. EDUCATION.

History of Education.
Universities of Europe.
System of General Education.
In England.
" Scotland.
In France.
" Prussia.
" United States.
Philosophy of Education.
Improvements of the System.

CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF THE WORKS.

The Library is intended to consist in the outset of fifty volumes, to be increased from time to time, as circumstances may require, until each school is furnished with perhaps 200 volumes, comprising the foregoing classes of works:

1. History, Ancient and Modern. The whole to contain a condensed but lively and spirited view of the history of the world; its settlement; the distribution of its inhabitants; the families of nations, and of languages; the rise and fall of empires; the present great powers of the earth and their connexion with the past.

2. Voyages and Travels, to be compiled from the works of the most celebrated travellers:—Anson, Cook, Kotzebue, Humbolt, Drake, Chateaubriand, Bruce, Park, Saussure, Peyrouse, Vancouver, Parry, Franklin, &c. The whole to be so arranged, as to bring all parts of the world before the reader, and to convey a general but accurate idea, of the various regions of the earth, as they present themselves to the eye of the traveller; and prepared in such a way, as to impart as much information as possible, in respect to the history, geography, and manners and customs of the countries visited.

3. Biography. The lives of great and good men, who have acted a conspicuous part on the great theatre of this world; and especially the lives of those from whose history good moral lessons may be drawn. Columbus, Washington, Franklin, Jay, Bacon, Newton, Howard, &c.

4. Natural Science, in its various departments, with a view to impart a general but systematic acquaintance with objects of interest and utility in the three great kingdoms of nature.

5. Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, exhibiting just views of the intellectual and moral constitution of man; the grounds of human obligations and the nature and claims of duty.

6. Political Philosophy, presenting the nature and objects of government and law; the principles of civil polity and political economy; the rights and duties of citizens; and various subjects of general interest, affecting the welfare of society.

7. Agriculture. To consist of a series of volumes, on the nature and properties of soils; the products of the vegetable kingdom; the culture and use of all trees, plants and vegetables, usually cultivated for food or profit; on the history, nature and management of the different domestic animals and their productions; in short, on all subjects connected with the pursuits of husbandry, designed to furnish the sons of the farmer, in a country destined to such high agricultural interests as ours, the best facilities for acquiring all necessary and desirable knowledge connected with their employments, their interests and their happiness.

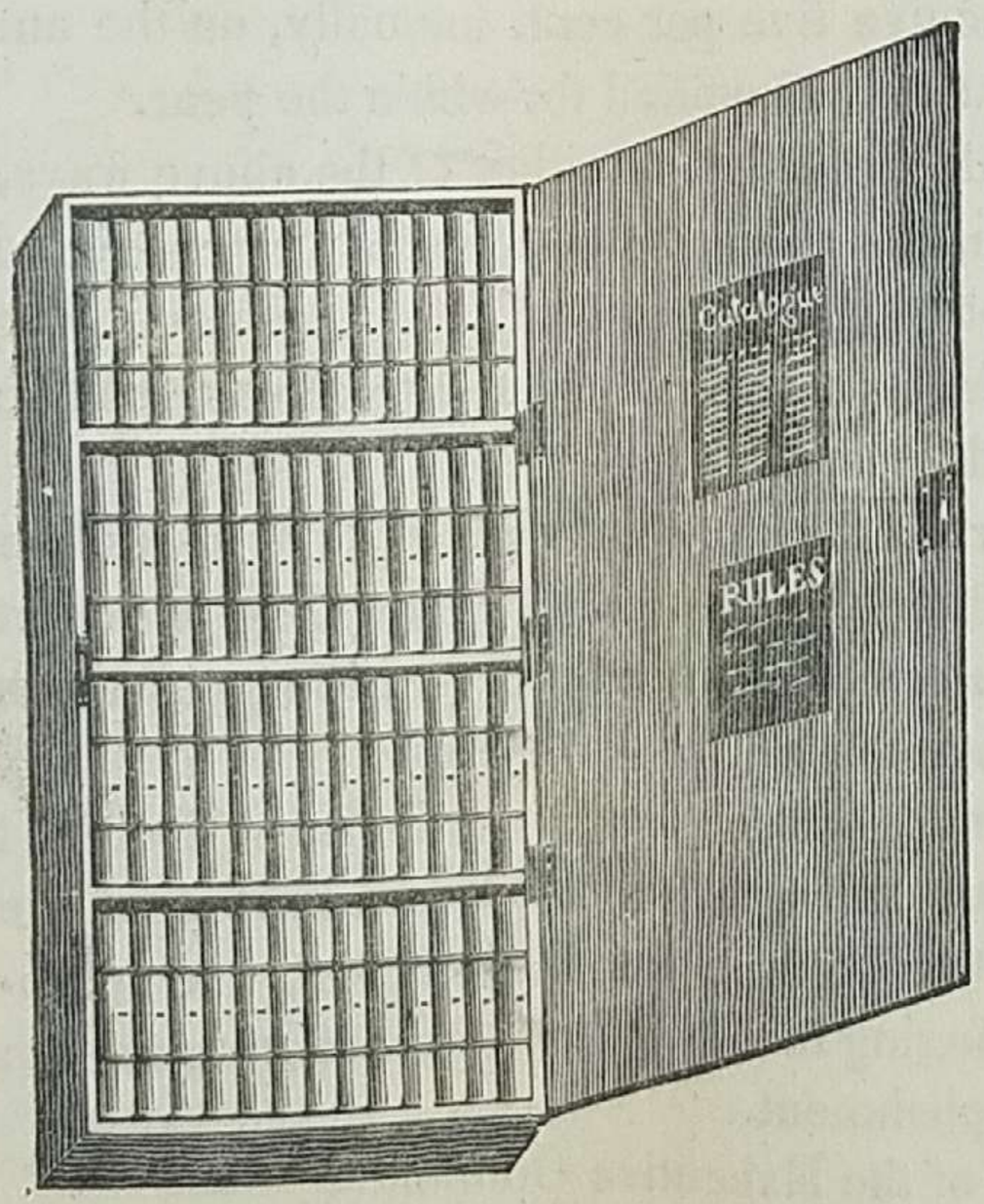
8. Manufactures and the Arts. A series on the various substances used in Manufactures and in the Arts; on the application of Science to the common purposes of life; with descriptions of processes, inventions, machinery and its results, calculated to be useful to the artizan, and interesting to every intelligent mind.

9. Commerce. Its history, and progress. Articles of commerce. Distribution and consumption. The nature of value, illustrating the principles of traffic and the office of the merchant.

10. Literature and Education. Comprising a collection of standard works, in English Classics, with which every family should be acquainted. Works on education, giving its history, its progress and prospects, the philosophy of its principles, in a way calculated to extend and deepen the interest in universal education.

It will be the object of the Society to embrace in the range of the publications all subjects of general interest and utility, and their greatest care that the whole be pervaded and characterized by such a spirit of Christian morality as shall fit it to refine and elevate the moral character of our nation.

The volumes are designed to be of about 250 pp. 12mo.; to be bound in a uniform and very thorough manner, and boxed in sets, so as to be bought, sold and transported with the convenience and safety of bales of merchandise; and the box to be so constructed as to answer the purposes of a case, when it reaches its final resting place in the school room.



It is, as will be perceived, a flat box, two feet long, one foot wide, and six inches deep, divided by partitions which become shelves when the box is placed upright, into four compartments. The cover is to be attached by hinges so as to become a door when the box is opened.

EXECUTION OF THE PLAN.

All the arrangements for carrying the design into execution, are in a state of forwardness, so far as they can be, before the necessary funds are secured. It is estimated that $15,000 are required to manufacture the stereotype plates for 50 vols. If this sum were furnished, the Library would be at once completely and permanently endowed, as arrangements can be made with publishers, if the plates are furnished, to supply the market fully and constantly, and defray all the expenses of manufacture and copyright out of the proceeds of the sales. Should, therefore, any benevolent individual, or the community, place in the hands of the society the means to procure these plates, the perpetual supply of the books, at the cost of $20 for the fifty volumes with their case, would be at once secured.

The Society take the liberty, therefore, to lay these suggestions before the community, and they solicit from any individuals who may be interested in the subject, a reply to this communication, offering either suggestions in respect to the general interests of the plan, or proposals for furnishing particular books, or aid in raising the necessary funds.

By the constitution of the Society, the annual payment of $5, or more, constitutes an individual a member; of $100, within any one year, a Life member; of $500, a Life Director; and of $1000, within the same period, a Life Director, and an Honorary Member of the Executive Committee. Members of the Society are also to be entitled to the privilege of purchasing publications at a reduced price; Life Members and Life Directors will be entitled to receive five per cent. annually, on the amount of their payments in publications, if applied for within the year.

Any individuals disposed, in either of the above ways, to aid the objects of the Institution, are earnestly and respectfully solicited to do so, as soon as may be, through the Treasurer, A. P. Halsey, Esq., Cashier of the New-York Bank, to whom all communications relative to financial concerns, may be addressed.

Any school or family, any Lyceum or other institution disposed to subscribe for the Library, or any individuals willing to undertake to supply the schools in a town or county, are requested to signify the same to the Committee, and the number of copies desired.

Editors of newspapers and other periodicals, friendly to the interests of education and the universal diffusion of knowledge, are respectfully requested to give this Prospectus an insertion, and to co-operate with the Committee in bringing this important object before the community, and securing its accomplishment.

In behalf of the Executive Committee,

LEONARD BACON,
THOMAS COCK,
TIMOTHY R. GREEN,
} Sub Committee.

GORHAM D. ABBOTT, Secretary.

New-York, October 12th, 1837.

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APPENDIX.

THE CIRCULAR.

The following is a copy of the Circular Letter addressed to gentlemen in different parts of the country, by the Committee appointed to draw up a constitution for an American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.*

"SIR:

A meeting of citizens has recently been held in this city, for the purpose of considering the present condition of the American Press; the prospects of our country, as likely to be affected by its influence; and the practicability and expediency of establishing a National Institution, on an extended scale, for the Diffusion of Knowledge, in connexion with pure and salutary principles, similar in its structure and design to European Societies for the same purpose. A Committee was appointed at that meeting to draft a Constitution for such a Society, and to take measures to secure extensively the union and systematic co-operation of wise and good men in every section of our country, in furtherance of the principles and objects it is designed to promote. As that Committee, we take the liberty of addressing you, respectfully inviting your attention to this subject, and your counsel and aid in the great work proposed.

It is universally acknowledged that the PRESS is the most powerful agent now acting on the human mind.— That our country is to be a field where its power will be pre-eminently exerted, is equally clear. The extensive circulation of newspapers, magazines, and other publications of every description, is creating among our population a general habit of reading hitherto unparalleled in the history of nations; and it inevitably follows, that individual and national character will, in a great measure be formed, by the kind of publications which gain the most general circulation among us; and that consequently, the destinies of our country, and its influence on other nations, will very much depend on the direction which may now be given to the PRESS.

The principle adopted by the Committee, is that the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge, imbued with the spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for bringing any people to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions. And that, in a country whose institutions depend for their prosperity and stability, not on the arm of power, but solely on the elevating and conservative influence of a pure, enlightened, and well regulated public mind, where the VOICE OF THE PEOPLE IS SUPREME LAW, the importance of diffusing information connected with sound and virtuous principles cannot be overrated. Intelligence and Christian principle constitute the palladium of American liberty.

Among the incidental advantages that may be expected to follow from the labours of this Society, will be the increased attention it will naturally excite towards the cause of Education. Already a deep interest throughout our land, in the subject of Universal Education, based upon the principles of the Bible, has begun to appear, and the importance of a more liberal and expansive provision for the wants of our rising population is imperatively felt. The mass of uncultivated mind rising up among us, of foreign as well as of native origin, indicates the necessity of some more adequate system for the mental and moral improvement of the community.

It is known that a large proportion of our juvenile population is coming forward with the rapidity of time, to exercise the rights and perform the duties of American citizens, without any adequate culture either of mind or heart. With multitudes of such character about to exert their influence on the state of society, what can be expected, but

* See Page 8.

that they will fill our cities and villages with crime, and our whole land with the evils and the sorrows attending an ignorant, vicious, and unprincipled population.

In some other countries, less favoured than ours, may be found a far more liberal and generous provision for the instruction of the people, than exists among us, if we take into view the whole extent of our territory and the aggregate of our population; and the Committee feel convinced, that the moral and intellectual condition of the people, even in the most favoured portions of our land, is below the standard which is requisite for the permanent prosperity of our Republican institutions. To extend, therefore, the means of diffusing widely among our people, USEFUL KNOWLEDGE, the Committee cannot but regard as an imperious duty devolving on every good citizen, as a Patriot, Philanthropist, and Christian."

In view of such considerations, it is proposed to establish a *National Institution* on the plan developed in the subjoined Constitution, to which the Committee particularly invite your attention. They also solicit your views of the principles it involves; your opinion of the probable reception, by the community at large, of publications to be issued under such sanctions; and of the sympathy and co-operation, both of a literary and pecuniary nature, in your district of country, which such an enterprise may be likely to secure.

REPLIES.

The following extracts are from the replies received by the Committee: —

FROM HIS EXCELLENCY GOV. VROOM, SOMERVILLE, N. J.

I have long thought such an institution was greatly needed; and, if I can judge rightly of the moral tendency of those agents which are now operating most strongly in the formation of character in our country, I should say, there is no time to be lost. The influence of the press is becoming very powerful,— especially the periodical press. And we cannot but be sensible, that in too many instances, it is prostituted to the basest purposes. Periodical productions, whether they be books, magazines, or newspapers, which circulate most extensively among the least informed classes of society, will necessarily accomplish much for good or for evil. And it is much to be lamented, that among them, there are so many of a decidedly irreligious and immoral character. These are read by the young, the inexperienced, and the ignorant. They almost strip vice of its deformity and crime of guilt. Skepticism and infidelity are encouraged, if not openly inculcated, and every ligament of moral principle unloosed.

How shall this crying evil be met? The press must not be muzzled. Freedom of thought and speech, and the liberty of the press are among our most sacred inheritances, and they cannot be abridged. I see no other way, than for truth and virtue and religion to make use of the same mighty engine, and to wield it with all the energy and force they can command. The antidote must quickly follow, if it do not accompany or precede the poison. The friends of order must act in concert, and under a deep sense of the responsibilities that rest upon them.

I rejoice that action has commenced on this important subject, — and upon a scale so broad and liberal, as to invite the co-operation of all good men. I will not entertain a doubt of its success; for I think there is enough of soundness and intelligence in public sentiment to sustain it, and sustain it well.

How the objects of the Association may be most effectually promoted and attained, is a matter on which there may be an honest difference of opinion. Without going into detail, I would give it as my judgement, that the press should be made subservient to the best interests of all ranks in society, as far as practicable. A purifying process is needed throughout. There is too much corruption in the popular literature of the day, even of the higher order. A pure standard should be raised, and every effort should be made to render it attractive. In literature of a lower grade, there is much to condemn, and something to approve. What is good should be cherished, and strong efforts should be made through the medium of very cheap, popular, and well executed publications, to counteract what is bad, and reform public taste and sentiment.

Whatever form or shape the publications are made to assume, I deem it indispensable,

that they should all rest on the broad basis of the Bible. Among a Christian people, no system of education or instruction should be countenanced, that is not founded on the great principles of the Christian religion. They are essential to the preservation of morality, order and good government. Civil liberty has no security without them.

From His Excellency Gov. Everett, Charlestown, Mass.

The principles set forth in the circular have my full concurrence. The evils alluded to, have long been felt and witnessed by me, with serious apprehension;—and could the proposed remedy be applied with spirit and concert, I have no reason to doubt it would be effectual.

From His Excellency Lieut. Gov. Robertson, Richmond, Va.

* * * It is impossible to contemplate the Press in any light less imposing than that in which you exhibit it. It is, indeed, as it exists in this country, with no preventive, and scarce adequate corrective checks, the master-power that is to impress finally, and rapidly beyond any other influence, a permanent character on the people of the United States, whether as individuals or a nation; and, through them, on all our institutions, political, social, and religious. According to the direction that shall be given to it, we shall be a wise, virtuous, happy, and united people, or a prey to jealousies and dissensions, carrying disquiet and apprehension to the bosom of every citizen, and entailing, ultimately, degradation and wretchedness on the whole country. It is, then, most worthy the wise and good to unite their efforts, and put forth all their strength, to direct this great engine to beneficent ends; to give all possible efficiency and expansion to its power to do good, and interpose every practicable check to its capacity for evil. No mode more likely to effect this noble object seems to have presented itself to the reflections of the Philanthropist, here, or in Europe, than the one which you, Gentlemen, have the honour first to have projected in the New World, and which you now submit to public acceptance. For one, I hail the projected experiment with the greatest cordiality, and shall watch its progress with the most fervent aspirations for its signal success. I cannot doubt but that similar aspirations will accompany the incipient Institution among all who love their country, or love their kind, throughout the wide limits of the Republic. In this district of country, the friends of Useful Knowledge and of a pure morality, will, I am sure, give cordial welcome and support to a society, proposing to itself the accomplishment of the great object which they, too, have so much at heart—the enlightening of the public mind, and the amelioration of public morals.

Please to enrol me as a Life Member. On the organization of the Society, the proper officer may draw on me for the amount of my Subscription.

From Hon. Theodore Frelinghuysen, Newark, N. J.

I regard the plan as one of the happiest promise. The demand for such a moral agency is urgent indeed: and I rejoice that this movement has been made, to meet a crisis in our country, full of interest and danger. The principle adopted by the Committee, that the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge imbued with the spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions, must commend itself to every mind, that has in any degree reflected on our condition and prospects. As to the probable reception of publications to be issued under the sanction of the proposed Society, I cannot doubt that this district of country will generally give them a cordial welcome, and cheerfully aid in sustaining the enterprise.

From Rev. Abiel Holmes, D.D. Cambridge, Mass.

For myself, I hesitate not a moment to give my unqualified approbation of your proposal, and of the plan set forth in the Constitution of the Society. To me it ap-

pears, that you have chosen the most solid materials for the basis of the proposed edifice, and columns of the highest order for the support of the superstructure. If it receive merited patronage, it bids fair to be a fabric of national utility and glory, and of a permanency coeval with the continuance of our Republic. Your illustration of the subject needs no additional comment. The reasons which you assign for such an Institution as you propose, will, I hope, be convincing to the community, and secure its cooperation. The principle which you have adopted, "That the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge, imbued with the spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for bringing any people to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions,"—is, in my view, incontrovertible; and while your adoption of it, is a pledge of high importance to the Christian portion of the community, it encourages the best hopes of all intelligent and honest citizens. All are alike concerned in the preservation of freedom; all, therefore, who accord with you in the just sentiment, that "Intelligence and Christian principle constitute the palladium of American liberty," must feel interested in the success of your benevolent and patriotic enterprise. That it may receive the patronage of the American people, and the benediction of HIM who "ruleth among the nations," and who only can "*command* the blessing," is the sincere wish, and will be the fervent prayer, of

Yours, &c.

From James Wadsworth, Esq. Geneseo, N. Y.

The object of the proposed Association appears to me to be most praise-worthy, and without making any further inquiries, I shall ask the privilege of becoming a life member. The constitution and prospectus appear to be drawn up with great care and ability. I send you by the Newspaper-mail a little pamphlet, which contains detailed reports respecting the moral and literary effects of the School District Library; please lay it before the Directors, and if after examination, the facts set forth in the reports do not convince them of the necessity and importance of preparing a School District Library, to be compiled with great care, and with special reference to the intellectual, moral, and religious instruction of our youth, and vended at the cheapest rate, it will be idle for me to add a single word. Please to say, respectfully, to the opulent Directors, that if we have not the spirit, during this plethory of wealth, to make the experiment, when will it ever be made?

From Hon. Chief Justice Hornblower, Newark, N. J.

The plan meets my cordial approbation, and shall receive all the aid as well pecuniary as otherwise, that my limited means will permit.

I have not time to express my views of the principles of the Institution in detail, but only to say, that if those principles are acted upon in good faith, as no doubt they will be, the Society cannot fail to prove a blessing to our country and the world; and will, I have no doubt, receive the patronage and support of the enlightened, benevolent, and patriotic portion of the Society in which my lot is cast, and of the moral and Christian community in general.

From Hon. P. P. Barbour, Frscati, Va.

I have no hesitation in saying that it meets my decided approbation. Abstractly, I should consider it a sound principle in politics, that no government like ours, founded upon public opinion, can permanently stand, unless the community, on whom it is to operate, be virtuous and enlightened. The truth of this principle is proclaimed alike, by the writings of wise men and the voice of experience, which has been justly called the "mistress of the world." Although in most of the states, and Virginia amongst them, some provision is made by law for the support of education; yet, in none is it so complete, as not to need all the collateral aids which it can receive. Amongst them, I know none promising to be more efficient than the proposed scheme. There is a large portion of the population of even the most favoured country, who have not leisure for a regular systematic course of study. To all such, there is great value, in productions issuing from the press, under the auspices of such a society as is proposed,

which, whilst they diffuse knowledge, imbued with morality and the spirit of Christianity, are presented in a form as interesting as they are instructive, and in a compass, which enables almost all to take from their daily vocations, time enough to read them.

This is no longer matter of speculation; the experiment has been tried in Europe, and experience has given it the impress of her approbation.

From Bradford Sumner, Esq., Boston.

I am exceedingly gratified to find that such a Society has been formed, and that so much valuable talent and influence are engaged for its support. The literature of the day, without doubt, needs some reform; and the plan proposed by your Society, seems to me well calculated to effect the object. Every institution, whose object and tendency are to purify, and to make broader and deeper, the streams of useful knowledge, must meet the approbation, and, to some extent, insure the aid of every Christian and Philanthropist. The proper culture of the minds and hearts of coming generations, can hardly be overrated; and the Society has my best wishes for its success.

From Rev. Charles Burroughs, D. D., Portsmouth, N. H.

I give it my cordial concurrence. When I consider the condition, operation, and prodigious consequences of the American press, its uncontrolled, and often reckless, power, the cheapness, activity, and eagerness with which it pours forth the streams of poison, the alacrity with which it pampers the basest passions of society; I do conceive that it is one of the first objects of an enlightened and Christian people to endeavour to purify such a fountain of intellectual and moral power, and by its mighty efficiency to counteract the mischiefs which it produces. This is to strike at the root of the evil. If the press be the potent and successful engine of moral ruin for bad men, let it be used as the potent antidote to what is bad, by good men; and thus be made a prolific source of mercy. Let Christian energy and wealth flood the land with productions, abounding in useful knowledge and holy principles. I know no vestige of ground, on which Christians can stand with stronger hopes of more brilliant triumphs, than on an enlightened press, sustained by an extensive combination of talent, and consecrated to truth and virtue and piety. Here is not only the loftiest, but the only ground, where there can be a holy league and effectual union of sacred effort. If the great and good of our land will unite to wield by some condensed operations, the almost omnipotent energies of the press, they will in a few years exert an almost miraculous moral influence on our land.

Moreover it is not only necessary that the learned and pious of our country should be awake and active in employing the greatest known engine of influence for the diffusion of useful knowledge; but it is also necessary to make men understand that knowledge should not be their chief object, but that it should be a sanctified knowledge, a knowledge intimately connected with religion, and acquired for the increase of moral power, for the production of a loftier virtue and a more extensive benevolence.

The productions of the English Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge have generally had reference to man only as an intellectual being; and seem to have had too little reference to religious responsibilities and to the momentous truths of revelation. The press, therefore, at this era loudly calls for the sanctifying influences of Christianity. I am satisfied that a National Institution, on an extended scale, for the diffusion of knowledge, in connexion with pure and salutary principles, is one of the most important measures in connexion with liberty and religion, with literature and education, with peace and virtue, that can be adopted in our country; and they also satisfy me that it is my duty, as far as it is within my feeble capacity, to co-operate with your Committee and others in the advancement of this design. I have no doubt of its success.

From Hon. Judge Cameron, Raleigh, N. C.

I cordially approve of the views of the Committee, and the principles on which the present Constitution is framed, and will willingly co-operate with them as far as I have ability, in the furtherance of an enterprise promising such highly beneficial results.

Branches of the Society in each state, co-operating with the Parent Society, located in New-York, will be the most efficient plan of spreading its influence.

From Hon. Judge Davis, Boston, Mass.

The plan appears to be seasonable, and will, I trust, be eminently salutary, tending, in some good degree, to alleviate the apprehensions of the Patriot, the Philanthropist, and the Christian. In this day of excitement and movement, the susceptibility that is manifested, impelling, as too often occurs, to *evil*, should encourage a belief, that it may be influenced to embrace the *good* and the *true*. Your Society, in the discreet and efficient performance of its assumed duties, cannot but have a beneficial agency, in counteracting the multiplied stimulants to folly, error, and depravity, and their afflicting attendants. The young, especially, it may be hoped, will experience the precious enjoyment of sober thought and rational inquiry; nor should we despair of impressing even dissolute wanderers, indulging the hope of beholding them recovered from sad bewilderment, and in their "right mind."

I would merely suggest a wish, that in the execution of the works intended for circulation, under the direction or auspices of the Society, *cheapness* may not be too much regarded. The reading public have a right to require better paper, clearer type, and better binding, than is too commonly presented to them. Performances of the character, indicated by the Association, should have a corresponding dress; not merely for immediate attraction, but for permanent preservation and use.

From Wm. C. Gilman, Esq., Norwich, Conn.

The objects of the Association appear to be of the first importance, and I have no doubt they will appear more so in the eye of the community, after the experiment is made.

From Francis Gillette, Esq., Hartford, Conn.

In accordance with my feelings, permit me, Sir, in the first place, to express the sincere joy with which I hail the projected enterprise, and the lively gratitude which, as an American citizen, I feel towards the distinguished gentlemen with whom it originated. In common with many good and patriotic citizens in this quarter, I have long deplored the demoralizing influences of the press; and have looked with anxious solicitude, for some remedy that should be at once efficacious and adequate.

Success, certain and glorious, must crown your benevolent efforts in the cause of virtue and mankind.

I hope that men of wealth throughout our country, will duly appreciate the importance of this enterprise, and contribute to the funds of the Society, with a generosity that will enable it to carry out its designs. In no way could they more efficiently subserve the interests of mankind, than by co-operating in the great work of disseminating light and truth.

From Hon. W. H. Seward, Auburn, N. Y.

I have no hesitation in declaring my conviction, that the object of the proposed institution, is the most important which can engage the attention of all wise and good citizens of our country. It is most certain, that a Republican government cannot live but as it is sustained by the virtue and intelligence of the people. This is an old and trite truth. But it is to me quite as obvious that there exist too many indications which show that the tone of moral sentiment, and the standard of intelligence among us, require great improvement.

It seems to me that the present is a propitious period for making the effort. The community are now, more than at any former time, disposed to reading; and although latitudinarian notions of religion and morals are boldly promulgated, the great mass of the

people are yet sound and firm in their adherence to the Christian religion. The number is yet very small of those who will depart from the principle you have adopted. "That the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge imbued with the Spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for bringing any people to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions."

From Chief Justice Durfee, Tiverton, R. I.

In my view, the proposed Institution has presented itself in answer to the pressing demands of the present moral and religious wants of the community. The present prevalent appetite for intellectual food, can be satisfied only through the Press, and the tastes, passions, and moral feelings of the rising generation, will take their character from the publications of the present day.

Every one, who contemplates the present condition of the American PRESS, must regret that an Institution on the plan proposed, had not been earlier projected. Most of the publications with which the country is flooded, do not seem to aim at any moral good — the object seems to be the excitement of intense feeling, with an entire heedlessness as to what such excitement tends.

I approve of the idea of the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge, imbued with the Spirit of Christianity. The Christianity of this institution will, I doubt not, be that *essential Christianity* which rises above all Sectarianism. I cannot permit myself to doubt, that the publications of such an institution, aiming at an improvement of morals and an advancement of useful knowledge, can be any otherwise than most favourably received by the community at large. Let the object be understood and felt, and their favourable reaction will be certain.

From Rev. Dr. Sharp, Boston, Mass.

I have read your circular and the proposed "Constitution of the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," with lively interest.

We are a nation of readers, if newspaper reading and the perusal of the light and ephemeral productions of the day can give us a title to that character. But although the "Newspaper is abroad," exerting a mighty influence on the views and habits of the people, yet every reflecting person must regret that the influence is too often evil and not good.

If this be the character of daily and weekly publications, it is extremely desirable that the Press should teem with works of a different kind. We need books for the rising generation and for those who are but "children of a larger growth," imbued with the Spirit of Christianity," and illustrating and enforcing those great moral and social duties, the observance of which is necessary to the preservation and perpetuity of our Republican Institutions. We need a better acquaintance with the thoughts and reasonings of pure and lofty minds.

The American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, if judiciously conducted, will, I think, to a good degree, meet the necessities of the nation in these respects. The liberal course which is intended to be pursued, avoiding all topicks which are purely sectarian, and elucidating great moral and religious principles, in which all Christians are agreed, will remove all occasions for jealousy; and I should hope, that men of enlarged minds in every sect, would gladly lend their aid in sustaining the Society.

From Joseph Cummings, Esq. Savannah, Geo.

I have examined the circular with care, and highly value the patriotism and philanthropy of those, who have originated the Institution.

The principles involved are without objection; and I cannot permit myself to doubt that our country will patronize so noble an object, which must have the effect, of giving unity to efforts, to instruct and benefit the present and coming generations. The Christian and lover of his country cannot but esteem such an object as worthy of his labours.

From John C. Warren, M. D. Boston, Mass.

I beg leave to express my approbation of the sentiments expressed in the circular, and my perfect disposition to unite in the prosecution of those philanthropic designs.

From Thomas Sewall, M. D. Washington, D. C.

I have long thought the press most shamefully perverted by bad men, and shamefully neglected by good men. It is no doubt the great medium through which to regenerate the community. The press, if moved at all, must be done by the associated influence of men; known, respected, powerful, and full of zeal, and then sustained by wealth. I rejoice that a few have already enlisted.

From Samuel Henry Dickson, M. D., S. C.

I hasten to express my cordial concurrence in the views expressed in that paper, and to offer every aid in my power to carry into effect, in this region, the purposes of a society established to advance the interests of knowledge and virtue.

From James Brewster, Esq., New-Haven, Conn.

I am much gratified with the whole plan of the enterprise. — *First*, because it is based upon Christian principle, as "indispensable to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions," and constituting the "palladium of American liberty." And *secondly*, because the Constitution invites the co-operation of all good men without regard to sect or party.

An effort like the one contemplated, is called for, by more considerations than I can designate.

From Rev. Moses Stuart, Andover, Mass.

I have read it with lively interest. With all my heart I wish you success. Gladly would I do something more than say, "Be ye warmed and be ye filled."

From Rev. Dr. Miller, Princeton, N. J.

The principles set forth in your communication, are such as I cordially approve. It gives me unfeigned pleasure to find the gentlemen whose names are connected with this plan, embarked in an enterprise so enlightened, so solemnly called for, and so likely, if wisely pursued, to serve the best interests of our nation. In such an enterprise, it will give me great pleasure in my humble sphere, to co-operate. And although at my advanced age, and with my multiplied engagements, it is not probable that it will be in my power to render any important assistance; yet my good wishes and prayers shall be cordially given to your efforts, and anything in the form of labour, that I may be able to contribute, shall not be withheld.

From Eleazar Lord, Esq., Tappan, N. Y.

The plan is, I think, admirable, alike for its simplicity, and its comprehensiveness. No event, assuredly, relating to the prospective welfare of society in this country, has occurred for a length of time, which in point of interest, of importance, or of promise, can be compared with that of the proposal of this Institution. Of its success, its great, rapid, and far reaching success, conducted as I am confident it will be, I entertain no doubt. But its success, if I am not greatly mistaken, especially its prosperous begin-

nings, will depend not so much on the accumulation of capital by which to sustain its undertakings, nor on the titles or pretensions of the works published, as on the influence of the society—the influence proper to such an association—the influence which proceeds from confidence already established in the characters of those associated, and of those who conduct the affairs of the institution.

It is, therefore, in my view, a great point so to organize and conduct the concern, that the entire volume and force of that influence may accompany and give impulse to every publication. In this particular, we have the advantage of those who employ the press to bad purposes, and we ought to make the most of it. They can print as well as we, and they can ply all that is corrupt in the hearts and practices of men; but with the personal, moral, intellectual and Christian influence, to be combined in this institution, and to be boldly exerted in its appropriate sphere, they cannot cope.

From Rt. Rev. Bishop Smith, Lexington, Ky.

I had heard of the movements with regard to the new Society with which you are connected, before receiving your circular; and my heart had hailed them with humble gratitude to God, as auspicious of the greatest good to our country, and to the souls of men.

From this remote point, the utmost we can say is, go on and prosper; and the God of all mercy prosper you!

If I were to condense my prayers for my country into the shortest compass, it seems to me that prayer should run — "Sanctify, O Lord, first of all, the pulpits of our country, and then, Lord, vouchsafe to sanctify the press."

From Rev. G. W. Bethune, Philadelphia, Penn.

We have loudly proclaimed that our free institutions are based upon the knowledge and virtue of the people. The necessity of strengthening these foundations of our prosperity, has often been urged by our enlightened rulers. Public and private bounty has been lavished upon Seminaries of every gradation. In many states, (your own in particular,) all that mere legislation can do, has been done to carry opportunities of instruction into every neighbourhood. Yet facts prove, that some such Institution as you propose, is necessary to supply the people with useful reading.

Let us, by cheap, entertaining, and widely diffused publications, place useful knowledge before every eye — teach every mind to observe and reason, and we will, by the blessing of the Father of Lights, soon have a foundation for a nobler superstructure, of social and political Virtue. Lord Brougham never displayed so much his mighty mind, as when he conceived the establishment of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. We may regret that religion mingled so little with his views, but we must admire the power of knowledge.

Establish your Institution, scatter your publications far and wide, light the lamp of useful knowledge in every dwelling, make our countrymen *conscious of mental power*, and all the various forms of danger which now flit among our people, will flee before it.

Such an Institution is necessary to secure the *morals* of our country. Give the people useful knowledge. Place your cheap periodical upon the evening table. Gather around parents and children to look at its pictures, and listen to its well told facts, and that good humour, which, like Cowper's tea, "will cheer but not inebriate," and you will keep them from the haunts of vice. The wood-cuts allure, the historical anecdotes entertain, and its simple illustrations of Natural History awaken a thirst for knowledge, fence their mind from the solicitations of evil, and store the memory with pleasant thoughts to occupy the soul, when, in the hours of labor, the body may be busy. Soon they will demand more, and you may lead them on farther and farther in the ways of wisdom.

The *practicability* of such an institution is beyond a doubt. All that is wanted is money. The experience of the English Society proves it. Surely, our men of wealth cannot but see the necessity of stemming the tide of immorality among us, swelled, as it is, by the continual incursion of foreign crime, and the too rapid growth of our newer territories, — too rapid, because outstripping the means of education and religion. Such an institution would do more to secure social peace and public virtue than all the courts and prisons in the land, and would yield a priceless dividend upon the gifts to its treasury.

From Clement C. Moore, L. L. D., Gen. Theo. Seminary, N. Y.

The very name of it is enough to secure the good wishes of all who are friends to mankind, if the Society but act to their name. I stand ready to lend my feeble aid in advancing the great and good end which is proposed.

From Professor Gird, West Point, N. Y.

The corrrectness of the views, which have been taken by the Committee, and the excellence of the proposed Constitution, will, I should think, be generally acknowledged. Publications issued under the Society's sanction, cannot fail to be well received by a large and valuable portion of the community.

From Rev. Dr. A. Church, University of Georgia.

So far as I understand the principles set forth in the Circular, I can but highly approve them, and sincerely hope that the Society may succeed. The objects of the Society, as set forth in the 2d Article of the Constitution, must commend themselves to every friend of virtue and knowledge and religion; and in a particular manner, I think the last as there set forth, a most desirable object, and one which may be accomplished by such means as the Society propose to use. We need, *greatly* need, good elementary books of instruction, — such as can be procured cheap, and yet are well adapted to the purposes for which they are designed. And could there be something like uniformity in these throughout our country, they would be greatly cheapened.

From Rev. Dr. Gillett, Hallowell, Maine.

I feel no hesitation in saying, that your institution would receive the hearty concurrence of all wise and good men in this region. Indeed, it is just what the exigencies of the times require; just suited to the spirit of the age. Something of the kind, you contemplate, must be done, to save our Republican Institutions from the catastrophe, which all other Republics have experienced. And, I look forward with confidence to the time when the "American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," shall hold a prominent place among the scientific and benevolent Institutions of our day.

From Hon. Thomas Rice, Winslow, Maine.

Could there be a fund, such as we think is contemplated, to enable the Society to move on in its operations, unembarrassed, and send throughout the land specimens of its publications, we think there would be very little doubt as to their speedy circulation. We would bid you "God-speed," in all your efforts for the good of man, and to preserve, unimpaired to our posterity, the rich legacy of our fathers. And when, instead of the fathers shall be the children, may such as then live in the U. S. A., behold a virtuous, happy, and enlightened people.

From Geo. Griffin, Esq., N. Y.

The proposed Institution has my best wishes, and I shall be happy to aid in promoting its success.

From Rev. Rufus Anderson, D. D., Boston, Mass.

A Society of the kind proposed, under the auspices of such men, is a *desideratum*, and cannot fail of being highly useful. We need to be far better acquainted with the extent, to which the means of diffusing knowledge have been spread in our country.

FROM ANTHONY BARCLAY, ESQ., N. Y.

Having often reflected upon, and suggested, the desirableness of such an association as is proposed in the circular, I have only to communicate my wish most heartily to co-operate in the objects which have been presented, to the extent of my humble ability.

FROM M. WILLARD HALL, WASHINGTON, DEL.

I highly approve the principles and objects of the proposed National Institution.

I have long seen the need of some efficient aid to promote general education in this country. The subject is of unspeakable concern, and it is embarrassed with various and great difficulties. To promote it effectually, it must be viewed in a new light, and brought under influences that have not been extended to it. To credit the public voice, we must suppose that there is an unanimous and hearty approval of all measures adapted to foster and advance elementary education.

There is a great need to direct the public taste, to awaken curiosity, in search of USEFUL KNOWLEDGE. Cheap publications, conveying such knowledge in a simple, agreeable form, are much to be desired. In respect to the publications that have been circulated, they have been the means of communicating very little knowledge, and their tendency has not been to implant or cultivate a useful taste or habit of reading. We need publications of *matter*, not of fiction, nor merely of precept or argument.

FROM REV. NATHANIEL HEWITT, D. D., BRIDGEPORT, CONN.

I rejoice, dear sir, as a father and a citizen, as a Christian and a minister of Christ, at the proposed undertaking.

FROM JOSHUA B. WHITRIDGE, M. D., CHARLESTON, S. C.

Unless something is done to enlighten the minds and purify the hearts of the people, how long shall we (as a nation) be able to maintain the position we now occupy? How long shall we continue to exert a moral and political influence among the nations of the earth? How long shall we be able to preserve our Republican Institutions? These are solemn considerations, and well worthy the attention of the patriot, the philanthropist, and the Christian.

FROM ENOS BARNES, M. D., ROCK STREAM, YATES CO.

If the press, instead of pouring forth an almost irresistible flood of light reading, calculated only to catch the breeze of popular favour, could be so conducted as to spread before the community only those healthful principles so greatly needed, and the want of which is by benevolent and intelligent minds so much deplored, all would soon be well; but as this greatly to be desired improvement, cannot, to any considerable extent be expected, the Committee have very wisely a *counteracting influence* in the second article of the proposed Constitution; which, if constantly kept in view by the Society, will eventually accomplish *all* its friends could desire. And I make this last observation with a full knowledge of the unlimited extent of the meaning: for a discovery by the people of the, although gradual, yet sure improvement which the labours of the Association must produce, will not fail to increase the number of its admirers and friends; and I doubt not this Society will be hailed by millions yet unborn as a mighty engine, greatly auxiliary to the accomplishment of the benevolent purposes of the Almighty towards our guilty world.

FROM REV. DR. LINDSLEY, PRES. OF UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, NASHVILLE.

I cordially approve the objects which your Society proposes to achieve, and also the means by which they are to be accomplished. My thoughts have been for several years

past, diverted to precisely such an organization. And had I resided in an eastern metropolis instead of a remote western village, I should not have remained silent or inactive to this late day.

I rejoice to witness so auspicious a movement of an enterprise so truly national and so perfectly philanthropic.

From Rev. Pres. T. W. Coit, Transylvania University, Lexington, Ky.

The institution proposed by the Committee meets my cordial approbation, for they seem resolved to found it upon a principle, the neglect of which has, in my view, made much "useful knowledge" worse than nothing, viz. that the education of the head must be combined with the education of the heart. I have seen so much mischief flow from an exclusive attention to the first of these species of education, that I have at times grown quite skeptical and disheartened about its *utility*. If the pure and philanthropic purpose of the Committee can be accomplished, I should rejoice for my country and for mankind. I am fully satisfied, that unless the intellect of this great nation be soon brought more under the control of moral and sacred influences, that no control will govern us but the iron one of despotism. Liberty and the freest liberty is compatible with virtue: when this Union cannot exist, the resort to physical forces cannot be avoided.

From Rev. Pres. Carroll, Hampden, Sidney College, Virginia.

With my own opinion on this subject of such vital moment to Americans, you are already, in some measure, acquainted. The design of forming such an Association, and of making it national, is truly a noble one, and in accordance with the liberal genius of our institutions. For the last ten years I have witnessed the various improvements in the press, with a degree of painful solicitude as to the ultimate direction which its increased power might take. I have said to myself, "what if the gigantic depravity of perverted genius and learning, shall have a preponderatory influence in wielding the energies of this wonderful engine?" And the recent increase of the works of fiction and other light and ephemeral trash, has made me tremble, lest my fears on this subject might yet be realized. I know of no theatre in the civilized world, where the press is likely to wield such an unlimited influence over the civil and moral destinies of man, as in our own country. A licentious press of itself, would be sufficient to work out our civil, social, and moral ruin, without requiring the lapse of any considerable length of time. To the mind of an intelligent observer, your proposed Society must appear to take rank amongst those grand conservative measures, called for by the exigencies of the times, and indispensable to the perpetuity of our political and religious interests as a people.

It is high time for patriots, philanthropists, and Christians, to bond together, and determine if possible, to gain the pre-occupancy of that ground, over which the influence of the press, in this country, will yet extend. It will be too late to do this, not many years hence. There is a wonderfully rapid *onward* course in all our efforts as a nation. The influence of the press will follow this law which governs all *American things*. If the virtuous and the good, do not manage this engine while they may, it will, of necessity, soon pass into other and different hands, and become in them, an appalling mechanism of mischief and destruction.

From Rev. Hector Humphreys, Pres. St. John's College, Annapolis, Md.

I most heartily bid you "God-speed," in your excellent undertaking; and any efforts of mine, to promote the circulation of your papers in Maryland, are at your disposal.

From Rev. Joel Parker, Woodville, Miss.

I look upon this movement as one of the most cheering evidences that God, in his holy Providence, will rescue this nation from the anarchy and infidelity, with which it is most alarmingly threatened.

From Rev. Wm. S. Potts. Marion College, Missouri.

In the sentiments expressed in the circular, I most heartily concur. The prostitution of the press, in our whole land, is most lamentable. The moral influence exerted by a large number of our periodicals, is of the most deleterious kind, and ought to call forth the exertions of every friend to the moral and intellectual cultivation of our youth. So many, through covetuous motives, have become the panders to vice and folly, scattering through the length and breadth of the land, their flippant tales, jests, and scoffs at sacred things, that it is high time some more honourable should stand forth, to cater for the moral and intellectual wants of this vast Republic. If the public taste has been vitiated, means should be taken immediately to rectify it.

From Samuel Agnew, Esq., Hamilton, Mo.

The object of the circular struck me forcibly, and excited an interest which it intrinsically possesses to produce on every mind, in any proportionate degree alive to the best interests of our country. The purpose is one worthy of the most enlightened patriot, and the warmest hearted Christian. I rejoice that so noble and benevolent an enterprise has occupied the attention, and enlisted the efforts of those whose character will give reputation and success to this generous enterprise.

It will give me real pleasure to co-operate in any way with the Society in promoting their noble enterprise. This far west needs, in a peculiar measure, the influence of this cheering and Christian effort.

From Benj. Bakewell, Esq., Pittsburgh, Penn.

Being fully convinced of the importance and advantage which might be expected to result from an Association of this description, if based on the principles of Christian benevolence and liberality, I shall be glad to receive a copy of the Constitution and such other information respecting the views of the Society, as may be necessary to form an opinion of them. Should they coincide with my own, I shall be happy to make them known in this community, and urge my fellow-citizens to co-operate with the Society in carrying them into effect.

It is presumed that an object so noble as the one proposed, will have nothing sectarian about it, and as every Christian denomination possesses sufficient knowledge of Divine truth, to lead its professors in the path of virtue, if they will honestly and sincerely follow it, no invidious distinctions will exist in an association whose professed object is "the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, imbued with the Spirit of Christianity," throughout the United States.

Minutes of the Meeting at Saratoga Springs.*

A meeting was held at Saratoga Springs, on Saturday evening, Aug. 6th, of persons friendly to the formation of an American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

The Hon. Judge Woodworth of Albany was called to the Chair, and Professor S. F. B. Morse, appointed Secretary.

Professor Proudfit of the New-York University, stated briefly the objects of the meeting. He mentioned that two meetings had recently been held in the city of New-York, at which it had been proposed to form a national Institution, upon a broad and Catholic basis, for the general Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

For the example which had prompted such a design, we were indebted to the philanthropists of England. It had been felt in that country, that a crisis had arisen, which demanded a combination of the talent and virtue of the land, to resist the alarming progress of ignorance and vice, and several noble institutions were now in spirited operation there, conducted on a scale commensurate with the great object to be gained.

The friends of a similar design in this country, were happy in acknowledging themselves indebted to the successful experiment made in our father land, for the first idea, as well as some of the principal outlines of their plan. And surely if an effort of this kind had been found necessary in England, it was doubly so here. We were citizens of a free Republic; and it was a universally acknowledged truth, that under such a government, the only pillars of public order, were the virtue and intelligence of the peo-

* Furnished by the politeness of the Reporter of the New-York Observer.

ple. It was a truth, which thrust itself upon the view, every time we cast our eyes over the moving, heaving surface of our American population; and though it had long been perceived and admitted, its deep and fearful importance had not yet been fully comprehended. That some effort of this kind should be made, was due to the national character. Who did not perceive that the situation and character of this people, was in an eminent degree peculiar; it had no parallel in ancient or modern times. There was an excitability about it, which, in a peculiar manner, exposed us to danger. The elements of society are here in a state of perpetual excitement. They need but a touch to kindle them into flame. Under such circumstances, it was our duty, as Christians and lovers of man, to look at posterity, and, while yet it was possible, to strengthen all the safeguards, which went to control and to direct into right channels, the mighty, irrepressible, ungovernable activity of such a mass of mind. Mere political institutions would be found utterly without force against the movements of such a power; their feeble restraints dropped from it like flaxen thread from the limbs of an awaking giant. It was *moral* restraints alone which could hold in the passions of a great people, free even to licentiousness, and increasing in a ten-fold ratio from the immigrations of every kindred people under heaven. This country enjoyed peculiar facilities for such an enterprise as had been proposed. If we had much to encounter, we had also much to wield. We possessed, in an unshackled Press, a power which our English brethren enjoyed in a far less degree. There they had a load of taxation and a rigid system of restricting laws to struggle against. The expense occasioned by the Stamp duties, was there so enormous, that it had prevented British Societies, though embodying such an amount of talent, wealth, and the influence attached to rank, from accomplishing much that might otherwise have been effected.

But, in America, we had none of these obstacles in the way. There was nothing here to hang on the wheels of the national machine; but, on the contrary, our situation combined many facilities for the accomplishment of the design, which ought to encourage its friends in immediately entering on its prosecution.

In the two meetings held in New-York, the object had been rather a careful and deliberate consideration of facts, than any attempt at producing popular effect. The result of such consideration had been a deep conviction that the time for such an effort was fully come.

The friends of the design had felt desirous that a meeting should be held upon the subject, at Saratoga, where, as they knew, much talent and influence would, at this season, be congregated, from various and distant portions of our country. A more extended meeting was expected soon to be held in New-York, at which, definite measures would probably be resolved upon, toward speedily entering on the execution of the plan.

Rev. Gorham D. Abbott of New-York, agent of the Committee, then submitted a statement of facts, showing the present condition of the American Press; the extent of its influence; the predominant character of its issues; and also gave a general description of the system of operations now in successful progress by National Societies in Great Britain, to make the power of the Press bear more directly and effectually on the intellectual and moral improvement of the people; and urged the importance and necessity of uniting the influence and efforts of good men in a similar organization for this country.

Rev. Dr. Potter of Union College, Schenectady, then addressed the meeting as follows:

Professor Potter said he had no prepared speech, but he could not refuse to give his humble suffrage in favour of a plan, the avowed object of which was the spread of *useful* knowledge. He laid emphasis on the word "useful," because all the claims of the plan rested on that feature. Some of the remarks, which had been made in its favour, might lead to the supposition, that the object of the proposed enterprise was the diffusion of *religious* knowledge: but such was not the fact. The object was to disseminate the products of uninspired human learning, but such parts of it as were pervaded by Christian morality. As the action of every Christian ought to be pervaded by a general influence of Christianity, so every book which was provided for the use of a Christian land should bear upon its front the Christian character. The object, however, was not to print and circulate religious books: that should be left to the different religious denominations, to whom it properly belonged. This undertaking did not profess to touch the peculiarities of any religious sect, nor to provide reading for Christians alone; but to provide and to disseminate that which every true patriot and enlightened philanthropist must approve. It had been charged upon one of the London Societies, that it had divorced literature from Christianity: and it might be said also that they had, in some degree, separated literature from science. Merely physical science, and its application especially to the arts, had hitherto appeared to form the great object of that institution; it had not given to Britaina

literature that was calculated to refine and to elevate the moral character. The institution contemplated by the proposed Association, designed to embrace in its range of publication, physical, moral, and intellectual science and general history, the whole to be pervaded and characterized by such a taste for Christian morals as should fit it to elevate and purify the public character.

He had remarked at the outset that he laid emphasis on the word "useful," in this undertaking. They heard it often said that "the schoolmaster was abroad;" but before he congratulated himself or his countrymen that such was the fact, he must pause. He knew that knowledge was power: but it was power alike for evil and for good. If he knew that what the schoolmaster sent abroad was truth alone, then he admitted there was ground of rejoicing, for truth was calculated to elevate the mind; but if it was error, if it was falsehood that was spreading, then was the boasted boon that fruit of the forbidden tree, "whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our wo." Better was it that the stream of knowledge should be shut off entirely, than that it should be poured abroad in ten thousand full torrents charged with the elements of moral disease and corruption. We were in the habit of glorying in the freedom of the press; but before this could be a legitimate ground of boasting we must know what was the character of the press. The press might riot in its liberty, and pervert it to a curse. What security had we, in the existing state of things, that its power would be rightly used? None, but the interest of those who guided it. The press, in a free country like ours, was our all. It determined the character of the literature of the people. And was it so that we had no other or better security for the application of so mighty an engine than motives merely mercenary? Under such a guidance what aliment would the press provide for the intellectual appetite of the people? Just what the people asked for. And what, in this age of phrenzied agitation was the kind of aliment for which the human mind would spontaneously ask? Would it be healthy aliment? Was it such as would send the vigour of moral health through the limbs and sinews of this young republic. Ah, no! There was but too much reason to fear that it would be such as was calculated only to madden and to degrade. With what anxious curiosity did the American public lately peruse the loathsome details of one of the foulest crimes, the revolting scenes of the interior of a brothel. He asked every Christian patriot if it was not time that something was done to check this stream of moral corruption? Had not the time come when good men should combine? Might it not with truth be said, that the destinies of this republic hung upon an hour? Ought not its true friends to stand by the national fountains and guard them from poison? The design aimed at was to construct an American instrument—an instrument of mighty power—to be wielded by the wealth and intelligence of the American people. They proposed this as a starting point.

The nation had been told with a taunting sneer, that Americans were a mere business people. He admitted that they were a business people, and he gloried in the fact. Even in that spot, consecrated as it was to recreation and enjoyment, they could not rest from business, but it was business of a high and holy character. The cause of Temperance had gathered its advocates from all parts of the land, and held them in conclave for days together. To-night they were assembled on another great concern of national importance; and on the next evening another weighty subject of public concern was to be discussed. He gloried in the fact that in this high sense we were a business people. But it had been asserted that we were a mere money-getting people: that the immense amount of talent which distinguished the nation was all combined and all expended, in the mere acquisition of property. It was true that great talent was thus engaged, and that vast amounts of property were accumulated. But for what? to be hoarded? to be used for the mere purpose of individual indulgence? It must be confessed that but too much of it was devoted to luxury and ostentation; but still, it was only justice to say that a great part of the national wealth was held by its possessors as a trust for God and for man. If the American people did display unprecedented talent, and industry, and enterprise, they displayed unprecedented liberality also. As to money, if this design proceeded, it must have it. Money constituted the sinews of such an enterprise. It was impossible to send forth millions of sheets daily, unless funds could be procured to start upon. The Executive Committee have asked the merchants of this land, men whom God has so blessed that they are becoming princes, to be the benefactors of this people, to feed their country with knowledge and truth, and thus send down an influence on the generations to come which shall bless them both for time and eternity.

Professor P. added, that there were the most cheering indications that there existed among the intelligent monied men of the land, a readiness to patronize such a design. It was not twelve months since an American philanthropist had offered to place fifty thousand dollars in his hands to be applied to the object, and to take all the hazards of loss in case of failure; but the plan not then being ripe for execution, he had since given to the

money a different direction. There was reason to expect other such instances of munificent liberality. In every one of our great cities, liberal donations might easily be obtained. One hundred thousand dollars, at least, should be raised to enable this society to carry its measures fully into effect.

Rev. Dr. Beecher of Lane Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio, then addressed the meeting. He dwelt upon the importance of diffusing through the entire mass of American Society, that knowledge which will purify and elevate the whole; alluding to the fact, that knowledge in its progress through the world, had hitherto been confined to comparatively small portions of human society. It had been like morning light, which gilds the mountain tops but reaches not the valleys.

The following resolutions were then adopted:

Resolved, As the opinion of this meeting, that a crisis has arrived in our country, i which the means of the intellectual and moral elevation of our entire population is due to them, and indispensible to the continuance of our invaluable institutions.

Resolved, That the proposed organization of an American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, is a measure urgently demanded by the exigencies of the nation, and wisely adapted to secure its end, and shall receive our cordial co-operation.

On motion of Rev. Dr. Potter, the meeting then adjourned.

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, Secretary.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING AT ANDOVER, MASS.

Agreable to invitation, a public meeting was held on the evening of September 6, 1336, at which the REV. DR. FAY, of Charlestown, was appointed Chairman, and the REV. SAMUEL M. WORCESTER of Salem, Secretary. The meeting was very fully attended by gentlemen from all parts of the country. After an address by Rev. Gorham D. Abbott, the following resolution, offered by Rev. Dr. Tappan of Augusta, (Me.) was unanimously adopted.

Resolved, That we have listenedwith deep interest to the statements of Mr. Abbott, relative to the plan of the proposed "American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," and that we regard it as eminently entitled to the patronage of all, who would promote the best interests of our country and the world.

Signed, { WARREN FAY, Chairman. / SAMUEL M. WORCESTER, Sec'y.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE STATE CONVENTION OF COMMON SCHOOL TEACHERS, HELD AT THE CAPITAL, IN ALBANY, SEPT. 20, 1836.

Resolved, That we have heard with the deepest interest the statements, by the REV. GORHAM D. ABBOTT, of the proposed organization and objects of the "American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge."

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this Convention, the peculiar state of our beloved country calls loudly for such an organization, and that we pledge ourselves to use every effort in our power to promote the objects of said Society.

Signed, { G. B. GLENDINING, / S. R. SWEET, } Secretaries.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING AT HARTFORD, CONN.

At a public meeting, held in this place, Sept. 17, 1836, President Day, of Yale College, was chosen Chairman, and Rev. T. H. Gallaudett appointe d Secretary.

Mr. Abbott made a statement of facts, and of the objects of the Society — when the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That this meeting, feeling the deepest interest in the statements made by Mr. Abbott with regard to the state and influence of the American press, and the objects and plan of the "American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," cordially approve of its leading design, and that we will, in the several places of our residence, cheerfully afford this Society our aid and co-operation.

Signed, T. H. GALLAUDETT, Sec'y.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY

FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.

"Promote as objects of primary importance, Institutions for the Diffusion of Knowledge."

WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

JAMES BROWN, Esq. of New-York, *Chairman.*

THOMAS COCK,	JOHN T. GILCHRIST,
JOHN TORREY,	LEWIS C. BECK,
ALONZO POTTER,	MARINUS WILLETT,
WILBUR FISK,	JOHN PROUDFIT,
JACOB ABBOTT,	JOHN A. VAUGHAN,
BELA B. EDWARDS,	WILLIAM ADAMS,
LEONARD BACON,	CHARLES S. STEWART,
CALVIN E. STOWE,	GEORGE F. ALLEN,
CHARLES BUTLER,	WILLIAM B. CALHOUN,
CORNELIUS BAKER,	ROBERT KELLY.

ANTHONY P. HALSEY, *Treasurer.*

GORHAM D. ABBOTT, *Secretary.*

THE deep interest now appearing in almost every civilized country, in the extension and improvement of popular education and the diffusion of knowledge among men, is a distinguishing peculiarity of the present age. The world seems waking up to the work of the intellectual and moral illumination of mankind. England, France, the Germanic States, and even Russia, appear to be vying with each other in measures to enlighten and elevate the great body of the people, and to promote the highest interests of Literature, Science, and Art. The appointment of "Ministers of Public Instruction," of "Boards," and "Commissioners of Education,"—the Societies for the "advancement," and the "diffusion of knowledge,"—the large private benefactions and public appropriations in furtherance of these objects,—indicate the extent and strength of this new impulse in the cause of human improvement.

The United States of America have not less at stake in this great movement of the age than any *other nation,* and must not be behind the very foremost in this great work of philanthropy. The Society named above, was designed to accomplish for our country what other instrumentalities are doing for other nations.

This Institution was organized about two years since, and was soon after incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New-York. Its general objects, as its name imports, are to extend the means and improve the character of public instruction;—to elevate the standard of our national literature;—and to promote the diffusion of knowledge and correct principles among all classes of the community. The Society aims to accomplish its objects, by uniting the influence and efforts of literary, benevolent, and philanthropic men throughout the country, in employing the appropriate means. The immediate designs of the Society are the following:—

1st. The publication and general introduction of a National School Library. It is estimated that there are, at least, FIFTY THOUSAND Schools, in our country, and it is now generally, if not universally, admitted, that every one should be supplied with an appropriate Library. For this purpose, the Society proposed, from the outset, the publication of a series of popular works, upon all those branches of knowledge, most interesting and useful to the great

body of the people; —including History, Voyages and Travels, Biography, Natural History, the Physical, Intellectual, Moral and Political Sciences, Agriculture, Manufactures, Arts, Commerce, Belles Lettres, the History and Philosophy of Education, and the Evidences of Christianity, — for it is a principle adopted by the Committee, "That the Universal Diffusion of Knowledge, imbued with the spirit of Christianity, is indispensable for bringing any people to the full enjoyment of the best civil and social institutions." The Committee have already adopted and published one set, comprising Fifty Volumes, of the most approved works on several of these topics.

Such a Library, embracing in its various departments, a wide range of subjects suited to the different tastes, ages, circumstances and capacities of readers, and prepared with special reference to this object, would bring the means of improvement and happiness within the reach of the youth and general population of a country, in a manner without parallel in the history of the world; and, stamped with the impress and breathing the free spirit of the Institutions of America, could scarce fail of becoming a means of so enlightening the minds, refining the tastes, and elevating the pursuits of the millions of our youthful population, as to bring them forward better prepared than any generation that have preceded them, to act nobly their part as men, and discharge faithfully their duties as citizens of a mighty Republic.

The Legislature of the State of New-York, at their last Session, passed a Law, making it obligatory upon each of the Ten Thousand School Districts of the State to provide a Library. The operation of this law during the three years to come, will occasion the purchase in that State alone, of nearly a Million of volumes. Many of the other States, both East and West, have also commenced action on the same subject, and there is every reason to believe that the School Library System, will soon become universal, and each of the Fifty Thousand Schools of our country, be furnished by law, or the force of public opinion, with a free circulating Library.

Books of the right kind and in sufficient quantities for this purpose are not now in existence: many must yet be prepared specially adapted to the object, and it is a question of momentous importance,—shall the books for these Libraries be supplied with no other care than what ordinarily attends a hasty selection? Language cannot exaggerate the evils which may follow the careless introduction of improper — possibly immoral — books to our youthful population, nor can the good be estimated which may arise to all the social, intellectual and moral interests of our country, from the universal diffusion of those of an interesting, pure, instructive and elevating character.

2d. The second object of the Society is the publication of a popular Journal of Useful Knowledge and of Public Instruction, congenial to the Institutions of America yet somewhat after the plan of the "Penny" and "Saturday" Magazines of England, of which Ninety Thousand copies of one, and Two Hundred and Forty Thousand of the other have been circulated weekly, exerting a most salutary influence on the intellectual and moral improvement of society.

3d. A third object is the preparation of a set of Text-books for schools. The great and crying evil of the multiplicity of inferior and improper books now in use, under this name, is too well known to call for comment. If a new, national, and standard set could be prepared, combining the excellencies of all books used in our own or other countries, teachers would rejoice, parents would be relieved of the constantly recurring evils and expense of a change of school books, and millions of minds would reap incalculable benefits.

The selection of a library specifically adapted to the use of Seamen has also been proposed; and likewise the *publication* of a series of entertaining and instructive works of a more juvenile character than those forming the school and village library, designed to develope the powers of the mind, and mould in virtue the heart of the young reader: a series, bearing the imprint of this Society, which parents, who have not the time to examine the multitude of books published, claiming to be of this character, may, with confidence, receive at their fireside, and commit to the hands of their sons and daughters.

The Executive Committee intended to have asked the contributions of their fellow-citizens, in aid of these great objects, in the early stages of their labours; but the commercial embarrassments of the country which immediately ensued have constrained them to go on silently and almost entirely unaided, until the present time.

No general effort has hitherto been made to obtain the necessary funds; yet, in all other respects, the Society has been making a steady and rapid progress, and a wide field of influence and usefulness is now opening before it. The attention of many distinguished men in all parts of the country, has been directed to its objects, and very general approbation of the plan, throughout the community, has been received, verifying the remark of one who has reflected much on the subject, "that the promotion of literature and general instruction has always been a rallying

point, which has united the feelings and concentrated the exertions of men, whose opinions on other matters were not only discordant, but irreconcilable. At all times and under all circumstances, this great interest has received from all men, of all parties, a constant and enlightened protection."

To accomplish the object of this Society, and to place it at once upon the ground which a National Institution of this character ought to occupy, it is necessary to engage the services of authors, to import the publications of similar societies in Europe, and such other books as may assist the labours of the Committee, to employ agents, and to stereotype and manufacture anew a second series of fifty volumes, in a style and manner, in all respects worthy of the object, and deserving a place, in every school room and village of the land.

The Executive Committee, at a recent meeting, in view of the obvious importance and practicability of these objects, and encouraged by what has already been done, Resolved to submit the claims of this undertaking to the consideration of the Legislative and Executive Departments of our National and State Governments, and to their fellow-citizens generally, throughout the United States, and respectfully to solicit their co-operation in this great work, and their aid in obtaining such an endowment for the Institution as shall make it worthy of our country and our age, and in some measure commensurate with the magnitude and importance of the interests it aims to promote.

JAMES BROWN, *Chairman.*
GORHAM D. ABBOTT, *Secretary.*

NEW-YORK, FEB. 15, 1839,

In accordance with the above Resolution, ~~of the Executive Committee~~ Rep.ᵗ C. S. Stewart, John Proudfit, John T. Gilchrist & G. D. Abbott were appointed by the Executive Committee a delegation to visit the city of Washington for the purpose of presenting to the Executive officers of the Govᵗ, the Judiciary, Members of Congress & other distinguished individuals assembled in the Metropolis, from various sections of the United States, the design plan & objects of the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. At an informal meeting, ~~held~~ on the evening of the 16.ᵗʰ of Feb.ʸ 1839, it was Resolved, by the gentlemen present, that a public meeting should be held by the Delegation in the Capitol on the following evening of the following wednesday the 20.ᵗʰ inst, ~~which Resolution was carried into effect by the Subscribers~~

~~(see printed notice)~~

~~Meeting of the~~

after which meeting the Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting in the Capitol

To the Hon. the Senate of the United States,

At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, it was

Resolved, in view of the National importance of the objects of that Institution, to submit an Exposition of its origin & designs to the consideration of the Executive & Legislative Departments of our General & State Governments, and to their fellow citizens generally throughout the United States.

The Undersigned were appointed a Delegation to visit Washington for the purpose of carrying the above resolution into effect, & we do, in behalf of the Institution we have the honor to represent, respectfully solicit the attention of your honorable body, to the objects of the Society, as exhibited in the accompanying papers, trusting that it may appear proper to Congress to take such order as may seem right, for affording the publications of the Society to the National Library.

and your memorialists will ever pray.

Washington. Feb. 18th 1839.

C. S. Stewart

J. Prondfit.

John J. Richards

Gorham D. Abbott.

25th Cong
3 Sep

[235]

Memorial

of the Amr Society for the Diffusion

of Useful Knowledge

praying the aid of Con-
gress in promoting the
objects of said Society.

1839. Feb. 19. Referred to the
Com: on the Library &
ordered to be printed

Mr Wright.

d likew